

AN
ACCOUNT
OF THE
LIFE AND DEATH

OF
MR. MATTHEW HENRY,

Minister of the Gospel at Chester,

Who died June 22. 1714, in the 52d Year of his Age.

Chiefly collected out of his own Papers,
BY
THE REV. MR. WILLIAM TONG.

*He was a burning and a shining light; and we were willing for
a season to rejoice in his light.*

John v. 35.

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TO

MRS. HENRY.

MADAM,

IT is not to renew your grief, that I dedicate to you these Memoirs of Mr. Henry's Life, and of the end of his conversation. I know you need no remembrance of that excellent person, whose life, while it lasted, was the great blessing of yours, and whose death has made such deep impressions upon your spirit, as, I fear, break in too much upon the comfort you ought to take in the many mercies that are still continued to you.

I am willing to hope, what you find here recorded will somewhat alleviate your sorrows. There is a kind of solemn awful pleasure in looking back upon our godly relations and friends that have fought the good fight, and finished well; and it is with the greater satisfaction that I present this narrative to your hands, because you are the most competent witness and judge of the truth of what is herein related; and though to strangers it may appear extravagant and incredible, yet to you it will be very evident, not one half has been told of Mr. Henry's exemplary piety and unwearied diligence.

I will ask no one's pardon for transcribing so much of Mr. Henry's own papers. It was my resolution, when at your desire I had undertaken the task, to make it as much his own, and as little mine, as possible. I have been careful, from materials of his own collecting and treasuring up, to give the world a plain and undisguised view of this worthy man, in every relation and passage of life; to represent him faithfully to all, in his childhood, and in his youth; in his improvements, and in his labours; in the midst of his comforts, and of his trials and afflictions; in his family, and in the church of God: and I have even followed him into his secret retirements, and having discovered there the most vital and beautiful actings of the power of godliness, I thought it

my duty to draw aside the vail, and shew the world the interior part of this living temple, that was truly sacred to our Lord Jesus Christ.

In reciting so much of his papers, I was desirous of paying my own tribute of respect to them as well as his.

When I resolved to insert so much of Mr. Henry's relative and family religion, and to be so particular in mentioning all the branches of the family, both direct and collateral, I had a desire to offer something to you, and to all his relations, that might be of constant use and help to you, and to those that shall come after you; and in this sincere affection I leave it now with you, and follow it with my prayers, that if any honour shall be done to Mr. Henry's memory, the supreme glory may redound to that great God, of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things. To him I recommend you and yours, as becomes,

MADAM,

Your obliged and faithful friend and servant,

W. TONG.

AN
ACCOUNT, &c.

CHAP. I.

His Birth, Parentage, Education, early Piety, and excellent Endowments.

MR. MATTHEW HENRY was born, on the 18th of October 1662, at Broad Oak, in the town of Ifcoid in Flintshire, within the parish of Malpas, which is in Cheshire, the boundaries of the parish not conforming themselves to those of the county, of which there are many other instances to be given: and it is the less to be wondered at here, because Flintshire was formerly annexed to Cheshire, and under the government of the earls palatine of Chester; or, as the ancient records express it, The county of Flint belongs to the dignity of the sword of Chester.

That part of Flintshire in which Broad Oak stands, is divided from the rest of the county, and shooting out so far into England, is called Maeler Saifanack, English Maeler. That which has most signalised this district in the British annals, is the ancient city and famous monastery of Bangor. It is with very good reason acknowledged to be the Bonium of Antonine, a Roman city; and, as an evidence of it, there are yet the names (and no more but the names) of the two gates remaining, Port Hogon and Port Cleis, which stand at about a mile distant from each other.

Certain it is, at this Bangor, which is now but a village, there was a very famous monastery, and perhaps the first that

ever was in the world, where the British monks lived in great devotion for several ages, and not only suffered very much from the Saxon kings, whilst they were Pagans, but, with true Christian fortitude, opposed the pride and usurpation of the See of Rome, to which Augustine the monk endeavoured to subject the whole island.

It was in this neighbourhood that Mr. Matthew Henry drew his first breath. His father was that eminent, holy, heavenly Mr. Philip Henry, whose name and memory is very precious, not only in that country, but in most parts of England. I shall not enter into his excellent character, as it has been set in a true light by this his son, and presented to the world in a sober and just account. It was the son's desire to have it done by another hand, lest it should be thought his affection to his father had bribed his judgment, and made him partial in his favour, or that he had designedly raised the character too high, expecting that the larger share of honour would thereby descend to himself, as the son of such a father.

But those that were so happy as to be personally acquainted with Mr. Philip Henry, can easily justify his son; they know he has not been at all vain and extravagant in the account he has given of so exemplary a person. He, like another Demetrius, "had a good report of all men, and of the truth itself; and we also bear record, and ye know that our record is true." The narrative is very well drawn up; it is plain, grave, easy, proper, and methodical; and much of it being taken out of his own diary, it carries its own evidences and its vouchers along with it, and that native life and spirit that cannot fail of making an impression upon the mind of any one that reads it in a serious manner.

It is a just and honourable monument erected to the memory of that great and good man; and yet, as the author tells us, was not so much intended to embalm his memory, (which is, and will be blessed), as to exhibit to the world a pattern of that primitive Christianity, which all that knew him knew to be exemplified in him. It is with the same design we now offer to the public these imperfect memoirs of the life of his son, of whom we can say nothing greater, than that he was a son every way worthy of such a father.

His mother was Mrs. Katharine Matthews, daughter and heir of Mr. Daniel Matthews of Broad Oak and Brunington, a gentleman of an ancient family and plentiful estate; the

whole whereof, in seven years after their marriage, fell into Mr. Henry's hands, by the death of their father; and was not only a comfortable subsistence for them, when Mr. Philip Henry was turned out of his living at Worthenbury for Non-conformity, but enabled him to preach the gospel to his dying day, and to afford seasonable relief to many others in necessity, even to a large proportion of his income, as the account of his life tells us, and many yet living thankfully remember.

This estate was the least part of the happiness which Mr. Philip Henry enjoyed in that relation; the person herself was a rich blessing to him, and to all her family. She was a great example of serious godliness, humility, and wisdom, and of the most tender conjugal affection; a just regard to religion and the ministry was her main inducement to bestow herself upon Mr. Henry, and from the same principle she always treated him with the most sincere respect. She met with no disappointment in him; nor did she ever shew the least regret or dissatisfaction, in having refused so many offers of large estates, and chosen a minister to be the guide of her youth, and companion of her life.

She was a very discreet manager of her family affairs, and (as her son observes in a sermon which he preached on her death, and has since printed), "She was one that looked well to the ways of her household; she provided well for it with ease and order; was a prudent counsellor, and knew well how to advise others; and (as he adds) she answered all the characters of Solomon's virtuous woman; and if her children, that reap so much benefit by her good example, and the good education she gave them, do not rise up and call her blessed, let every body call them ungrateful, and you can call them no worse."

These were the holy, happy parents of Mr. Matthew Henry; and those that knew them and him must needs observe, that he did not only bear the image of what was earthly, but (through divine grace) of what was heavenly in them. Some have thought the son had that in him in which his parents did severally excel, his father's strong and solid judgment, with his mother's vivacity, affection, and zeal. Indeed, both his parents had a large share of wisdom and activity; and how much of these good qualifications their son was possessed of, his life and labours will best discover.

I know not whether the reader will think it worth his while to observe, that Mr. Matthew Henry was born the same year in which his father, and many hundreds more of godly faithful ministers, were silenced; and not two months after that black Bartholomew act, when England fanned away and lost so much mercy in one day; "when their brethren that hated them cast them out," God was then making provision for another generation, a seed to serve him in the ministry, for whom he had appointed fairer and more peaceful days, such as, through the patience of God, we have now enjoyed for eight and twenty years, and do still enjoy the same.

Mr. Matthew Henry often took notice with pleasure how many ministers of his particular acquaintance were born that year; and in his diary has mentioned a certain time and place, when several of us of that age had the comfortable opportunity of meeting and worshipping God together. Some of them remain to this day, but the greater part are fallen asleep.

As to the birth of Mr. Matthew Henry, I find a short note, intimating, that they were under some surprise that the midwife was not come, and therefore the usual means were wanting; but that God who can work without means, was a present and an effectual help in that time of trouble. It seems his parents had removed from Worthenbury to Broad Oak but about a fortnight before he was born, his father not being suffered to continue there any longer. He was baptised the next day, being the Lord's day, by Mr. Holland, (I suppose the minister of Whitewell chapel). His father desired Mr. Holland to omit the sign of the cross, but he said, He durst not do it; to which Mr. Henry replied, "Then, Sir, let it lie at your door." However, godfathers and godmothers there were none.

He was the second son and second child of his parents. His elder brother John, who was born a year before him, died in his sixth year, of the measles; he was a child of extraordinary pregnancy and forwardness in learning, and of a very good disposition; his excellent father left this short memorial of him, "*Præterque ætatem nil puerile fuit.*" Before he was seized with the distemper of which he died, he was much affected with some verses he had met with, in Mr. White's book called "*The Power of Godliness,*" about those that die young. These verses you have recited in the life of the

father, to which I must refer those that desire to know what they were, that made such impressions upon that tender mind.

Mr. Matthew Henry was himself sick at the same time with his brother, and of the same disease of which his brother died. He very narrowly escaped death; but God had a great work for him to do, and spared the tender grape for the blessing that was in it: and a great blessing it has proved to be to his family, to his friends, and to the church of God. He was but a weakly child, often subject to agues and other indispositions, which yet were so ordered and limited by his heavenly Father, as neither to hurt his great capacity for learning, nor hinder his improvements, even in those early days of his life. He was able to read a chapter in the Bible very distinctly at about three years old, and with some observation of what he read: and indeed, as one of his near relations, and the companion of his younger days, declares, his childish years were sooner over in him than in any other persons; he very early put away childish things.

I have now in my hands several little papers, written with his own hand when he was but thirteen years old, for they bear date Oct. 18. 1675, in which he sets down what he calls a catalogue of the mercies of God to him. I shall give it you in his own words.

“ 1. Spiritual mercies.

“ 2. Temporal mercies and deliverances.

“ 1st, For spiritual mercies; for the Lord Jesus Christ, his incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession; for grace, pardon, peace; for the word, the means of grace; for prayer; for good instructions; for the good I have got at any time under the word; for any succour and help from God under temptation; for brokenness of heart; for an enlightening. Lord Jesus, I bless thee for thy word; for good parents; for good education; that I was taken into covenant betimes in baptism; and, Lord, I give thee thanks that I am thine, and will be thine.

“ I think it was three years ago that I began to be convinced, hearing a sermon by my father, on Psalm li. 7. ‘The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.’ I think it was that which melted me; afterwards I began to enquire after Christ.

"Dec. 7. 1673. On a sabbath-day morning, I heard a sermon that had in it the marks of true grace; I tried myself by them, and told my father my evidences; he liked them, and told me, if those evidences were true, (as I think they were) I had true grace. Yet after this, for two or three days, I was under great fear of hell, till the Lord comforted me. Having been engaged in serious examination, what hopes have I, that when I die, and leave this earthly tabernacle, I shall be received into heaven? I have found several marks that I am a child of God. His ministers say,

"1. There is a true conversion when there have been covenant transactions between God and the soul; and I found that there have been such between God and my soul, and I hope in truth and righteousness: and if I never did this before, I do it now; for I take God in Christ to be mine, I give up myself to be his in the bond of an everlasting covenant, never to be forgotten. *Quest.* But hath it been in truth? *Ans.* As far as I know my own heart, I do it in truth and sincerity; I did it Dec. 7. Sept. 5. Oct. 13. and many other times; I do it every day.

"2. Where there hath been true repentance for sin, and grief, and shame, and sorrow for it as to what is past, with all the ingredients of it, as confession, aggravation, self-judging, self-condemning, &c.; and I have found this in me, though not in that measure that I could desire. I have been heartily sorry for what is past; I judge myself before the Lord, blushing for shame that I should ever affront him as I have done; and ministers have assured me, that having repented of sin, and believed on Christ, I am to believe that I am pardoned. Now I have done this, and I do really believe that I am forgiven for Christ's sake. This is grounded on several scriptures. Prov. xxviii. 13. "He that covereth his sin shall not prosper; but he that confesseth and forsaketh, shall find mercy." Isa. i. 18. "Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be like wool." Isa. lv. 7. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Matth. v. 4. "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." Acts ii. 37, 38. "Now when they heard

this, they were pricked in the heart, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Acts iii. 19. "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." 1 John i. 9. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." And many other scriptures there are, where God doth expressly call people to return and repent. *Quest.* But hath this sorrow been true! *Ans.* As far as I know my own heart, it hath been true. *Obj.* But I sin often. *Ans.* I lament and bewail it before the Lord, and I endeavour by the grace of God to do so no more.

"3. Where there is true love of God; for to love the Lord our God with all our soul, and with all our strength, is better than whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices. Now, as far as I know my own heart, I love God in sincerity. *Quest.* But is that love indeed sincere? *Ans.* As far as I can judge, it is so; for,

"1. I love the people of God; all the Lord's people shall be my people.

"2. I love the word of God; I esteem it above all, I find my heart so inclined, I desire it as the food of my soul, I greatly delight in it, both in reading and hearing of it, and my soul can witness subjection to it in some measure. I think I love the word of God for the purity of it; I love the ministers and the messengers of the word; I am often reading it; I rejoice in the good success of it; all which were given in as marks of true love to the word, in a sermon that I lately heard on Psal. cxix. 140. "Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it."

"2. For temporal mercies and deliverances. When I was new born, as I have oft heard my mother say, I was very weak, and so sickly, that most thought I could not live, yet the Lord appeared for my deliverance. It is to day thirteen years since I was born, and the Lord hath preserved me ever since, blessed be his holy name. Blessed be God that I have had a good education, and was taught so early to read my Bible. In the year 1667, in April, brother John, sister Sarah, and I, had all of us the measles together. A-

April 2. brother John died, and it was thought by most that I should have died; yet, contrary to the fears of many, my sister and I are alive, blessed be free grace, distinguishing mercy. Matth. xxiv. 40. (Allusion) "One shall taken, and the other left." The same summer I had the ague, it hung long upon me, and yet God again delivered me.

"After this sickness in the year 1669, I had health, and began to learn my grammar; blessed be God that gave me an understanding. Mr. Turner entered me a little into the principles of grammar, and my father has carried me on in it; the Lord grant he may live to perfect it.

"In March 1669, my dear father had a sore fever; we thought he would have died: but our extremity was God's opportunity, and he arose and helped us.

"In August 1671, my father went towards London, and returned again in safety, blessed be God. In September 1672, I had a fever, was very ill, but recovered."

Thus far I have transcribed Mr. Matthew Henry's own papers. They were written, as I have said, when he was but thirteen years old. I have given you his own words; and if there be any thing in them that discovers the simplicity of his young and tender years, I believe all must own, there are many things in them that savour of spiritual wisdom, and gracious experience, even far above his years.

You will remember he dates his conviction of sin from the tenth year of his age; and how deep a sense does he express of the corruption and sinfulness of his nature! though his childhood had less in it of vanity, than that of most persons I have ever heard of, yet his tender heart was greatly melted and broken for sin, and he was enabled, through grace, to offer very early unto God the sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit, which God did not despise. He that hath said, "I love those that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me," was doubtless, in the Lord Jesus Christ, pleased with that early oblation which Mr. Henry made of the first fruits of his heart and life to God; and this was a happy earnest of a plentiful harvest, both of grace and usefulness here, and of glory and blessedness hereafter. Surely, when God heard him so earnestly bemoaning himself, he beheld him with an affectionate compassion, as a dear son and a pleasant child.

It appears by these papers, that when he was but eleven years old, he was led into the vital principal part of religious

wisdom, the knowledge of himself, and of the state of his own soul towards God; and upon strict examination, by the rule of God's word, was enabled to draw the comfortable conclusion, that he was converted and pardoned. You see the method in which God dealt with his soul; his ear and heart were opened betimes to the preaching of the word; he heard his good-father and other ministers press the duty of self-examination, and lay down marks for trial; this was the constant way of our good old Puritan preachers, and God made it a means of sound conversion to many souls. Young Mr. Henry was taught of God to approve of that kind of heart-searching preaching, and to apply it to himself; he went over the several signs of true grace, and found something of them wrought in his own soul; and that his faith and comfort might not stand in the wisdom of men, but the word of God, he searched the scriptures, as the ground and touchstone of all; and yet, suspecting the deceitfulness of his own heart, he opened it freely and faithfully to his father, desiring his help in this great concern of his soul. And what greater joy could such a father have, than to hear his son, his only son, at the age of ten or eleven years, thus inquiring after God, asking the way towards heaven, with his face thitherward!

Among other signs of a true conversion, by which he judged of his state, you see what stress he laid upon his love to the word of God. He could say, even at that age, he desired it as the food of his soul; he delighted in it; his soul was brought into subjection to it; he loved it for its purity; he loved to read and hear it; he rejoiced in the success of it; and by his love to the word, he discovered the truth and sincerity of his love to God. This was an early specimen of his acquaintance with the holy Scripture, and helped to fix his soul for that close and constant study of the Bible, which was the pleasant business of his whole life, and made him so ready and mighty in the sacred oracles; as another Timothy, from a child he had been acquainted with the holy Scriptures, which not only made him, for his own part, wise to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus, but, as a man of God, made him perfect, and thoroughly furnished to all the good works of his ministerial office, to which he was afterwards called.

Here was a happy foundation laid for a holy useful life, to be thus kept under the power of restraining grace from his very infancy, and at ten years old to be awakened, concern-

ed, and troubled for the sin of his nature; and in a year after, upon diligent search, to be well satisfied that God had taken him into the bond of the covenant, that he was justified, sanctified, and accepted by him in Christ. What might not be expected from one so early and so eminently holy, if his life should be spared? Every one that knew him would promise themselves the satisfaction of seeing him abundantly fruitful and serviceable in his day and place.

And indeed, when we observe how he set out for heaven, how soon and how seriously, we do not wonder that the ways and service of God were so pleasant and delightful to him all his days, that he went through his great work with so much comfort and cheerfulness. Religious wisdom entered into his soul betimes, it gradually grew up with him, and was become natural to him; he knew no other pleasure; he was willingly a stranger to the vain diversions and delights of the sons of men; his mind was happily prepossessed and taken up with God and for God: he had no room, no time, no relish for those trifles that deceive and defile the minds of the generality of young persons in every age, and especially of our own. Behold the unspeakable advantages of an early acquaintance with God and Christ!

How much did Mr. Henry's childhood and youth differ from that of most others among us, how much it did excel, let every one judge for himself. How few can look back with comfort upon what they were, and what they did, and what they experienced in their souls at ten, eleven, and twelve years old? How few of us that are now ministers were so early sanctified and prepared for sanctuary work? How few can reflect on those early days, without sorrow and shame? Let conscience tell us all how it was then with us. Was that part of life employed in mourning for sin, and seeking the favour of God with our whole hearts, setting ourselves at the bar of God's word, and ordering our cause before him? Were we then searching the scriptures, and bringing them home to our own souls? Did we at that time of life come under the constraints of the love of Christ, and renew the sacred bonds of our baptismal covenant? They are indeed happy that can truly say this of themselves, as Mr. Henry could do. I fear the number of such is not great. It is a mercy to be under restraining grace, but how few have known so early a renovation! No wonder if Mr. Henry so far excelled most of his brethren in wisdom, holiness, and service; he set out much

sooner, and had made a great proficiency in the ways of God, before many others had taken one step in them. They that set out later should work the harder; and yet Mr. Henry went beyond us in his great diligence in the work of God, as much as he set out before us in his application to it.

I have received from a near relation of his a passage, which I think very remarkable. The scoffers of this age will perhaps divert themselves with it; but I shall not conceal it to humour them. When he was ten years old, (the time from which he dates his effectual calling) he was visited with a lingering fever, which brought him very low; his life was almost despaired of, and death every day expected. This was a great trial of the faith and patience of his good parents. His father, who used to say, "Weeping must not hinder sowing," was obliged to go out to a place at some distance to preach the gospel, and left his son very ill; but he must be about his Father's business, (and at that time they had an indulgence granted by the king). At his return he found matters much as he left them, his son, his only son, whom he loved, in extreme danger. There was then at his house a good old gentlewoman, the widow of the Rev. Mr. Zachary Thomas, helping and comforting them under this affliction; Mr. Philip Henry told them, "At such a time and place upon the road, I did most solemnly, freely, and deliberately, resign up my dear child unto God, to do what he pleased with him and me." Mrs. Thomas replied, "And I believe, Sir, in that place and time God gave him back to you again." It is certain, after this he sensibly and speedily recovered." His good sister, who gives me this account, observes upon it, "Though I was then but a child of eight years old, and could think but as a child, I was very much affected with that discourse between my father and Mrs. Thomas. It tended to endear my brother the more to me, since I really believed he was given to us back again in an extraordinary manner."

This relation of his very well remembers how, when they were children, he and his sisters were directed by their father to spend an hour every Saturday afternoon in religious exercises, in which he was always their leader; and he took great pleasure in joining with them in such work, which was to prepare them for the sanctification of the Lord's day; and if at any time he thought his sisters too short in prayer, he would gravely and gently tell them, it was impossible, in so

short time, to include all the cases and persons which they had to recommend to God in prayer. They always took his admonitions kindly, and own it now, to the glory of God, that their brother's example did greatly engage and encourage them in the duties of religion.

It was observed by all that knew him, how great a quickness he had in learning any thing, and how strong a memory to retain it, talents that do not often meet in the same person; he could do very much in a little time, and yet did not allow himself to lose any of his time. Under such advantages, it was impossible for him not to make very great improvements in every kind of knowledge he was pursuing. His tender mother was often afraid lest he should overdo it, and was sometimes forced to call him down out of his closet, when he was very young, and advise him to take a walk in the fields, lest his health should suffer by too much confinement and application to his books.

His surviving relations declare with pleasure, that they have not known the least angry or unkind word pass between him and his sisters while they lived together in their father's house; they lived in unity and love, and it was neither lost nor lessened when they were separated and placed in families. Brotherly love continued to the very last.

He always had the greatest duty and deference for his parents, and always paid it in a most becoming manner; he laid up their words in his heart. When he was very young, he would attend with a very uncommon diligence upon his father's preaching, would often be so affected with it, that as soon as the exercise was over, he would hasten to his closet, and there weep and pray over the word, and sometimes would hardly be prevailed with to come down to dinner on the Lord's day, lest the word should slip away from him, or the warm impressions be lost.

One time particularly, when his father had been preaching of the nature and growth of true grace, as compared in scripture to a grain of mustard seed, which, though very little in appearance, would in time produce great things, he fell under a great concern of soul, that he might be possessed of such a gracious and powerful principle; and having walked out with his father, and opened the thoughts of his heart to him, he came to one of his sisters, with great satisfaction and cheerfulness, and told her, he hoped he had now received that blessed grain of true grace in his soul; and the conse-

quence abundantly answered his earnest expectation and desire. How fruitful and how flourishing a tree sprang up from it, those that have sat under it, with spiritual pleasure and advantage, must always remember, to the praise of that God from whom all our fruit is found.

We have no reason to doubt but that, from his very childhood, he had an inclination to the ministry. The delight he had in reading the holy Scriptures, and learning the sense of them; his love to all the faithful ministers of Christ, as he came to be acquainted with them, and the pleasure he took in writing down and repeating sermons, were plain indications which way the bent of his soul lay. When he was very young, he loved to imitate preaching, not in a childish manner, but with a propriety, gravity, and judgement, far beyond his years.

I have been told by an aged Christian that lived near his father's house, that he would, when very young, meet frequently with some good people that used to pray together, and confer about spiritual concerns, and that he would not only pray with them, and repeat sermons, but would sometimes explain the chapters read, and enlarge upon them, very much to the benefit and comfort, and even to the wonder of those that were present: and when one of them expressed some fear to his father, lest his son should be too forward, and fall into the snare of spiritual pride, his father replied, "Come, let him go on, he fears God, and designs well, and I hope God will keep him, and bless him."

In the life of Mr. Philip Henry, we are told, it was usual with him to have some young student in his house that was about to enter upon the ministry, and they were helpful to him in instructing his children. Among some others, I find the most notice is taken of Mr. William Turner, as one of the first he had with him. He came thither in the year 1668. It seems he was born in the neighbourhood, and was of Edmund's hall in Oxford, and was many years vicar of Walburton in Suffex, a very serious, laborious, and useful preacher, to whom, as Mr. Henry has observed, the world is obliged for his elaborate history of all religions, which he published in the year 1695; and since that, for that noble and useful record of remarkable providences, which was only expected when Mr. Matthew Henry published his father's life, but has been since perfected and printed in folio, and is a very acceptable performance to a serious reader, that loves to

consider the work of the Lord, and the operations of his hands.

This Mr. Turner, while he was at Broad Oak, was partly a tutor to the son, and partly a pupil to the father. He introduced Mr. Matthew Henry into the grammar learning, but his father carried him on in it. It was from his father that he had the greatest advantages of his education, both in divine and human literature; under his eye and care he continued till he was about eighteen years old, growing up in wisdom and goodness, and in favour with God and man.

Thus we have seen him passing through the first remarkable stage of life, escaping the usual follies and vanities of childhood and youth, wisely improving the helps and opportunities he enjoyed in the day of his choice, following hard after God, and exhibiting to all that knew him an early and a noble specimen of eminent piety and usefulness in the future course and passages of his life; all his friends had conceived great hopes concerning him, and of those hopes none of them had any reason to be ashamed.

And indeed he had something in his very constitution and temper, that being so early sanctified by special grace, very much promoted his great usefulness.

Though he was but a weakly child, as we have heard, yet, as he grew up, he became strong and healthy, and had, for near forty years together, a great share of health, and a constitution fitted for the labours to which it was devoted.

His natural temper was very easy and chearful, he was on this account a most desirable friend and companion; his conscience was purified and pacified betimes, and his duty was thereby rendered always pleasant to him.

He had a very ready and clear apprehension; he would as soon discern the truth and the bottom of any case proposed to him, as any person that I ever knew; had a quick turn of fine and proper thoughts on every subject and occasion. In matters of controversy, he would presently come to the hinge upon which the argument turned, and with the least ado or trouble to himself or others, would set the matter in its proper light.

He was of a lively active spirit; he could not endure to be idle, and was the least fond of any sort of diversion, even when young, that I have ever known. His business, and a free conversation with his friends, was his diversion; he wondered that any should need other or better recreation.

He had an happy freedom and presence of mind, though very remote from pride and self-confidence ; his mind was well furnished, and his integrity gave him a decent and generous openness and courage in conversation. He was neither puffed up with a vain conceit of himself, nor bound down with slavish diffidence ; he had the possession of his own thoughts, and a well-becoming liberty of expressing them on all occasions.

Every body will own, such a genius as this, improved by a learned education, and rightly disposed and fixed by the grace of God, must be an unspeakable advantage to him ; it greatly fitted him for every good work, and made all very easy to him.

CHAP. II.

His Preparations, and excellent Qualifications for the Ministry ; his Entrance upon it ; his Ordination.

THE advantages of education which Mr. Matthew Henry had in his father's house were so great, and so peculiarly fitted to prepare him for the ministry, that one cannot easily imagine what reason there should be for his going elsewhere. Every one knows Mr. Philip Henry was an excellent scholar, as well as an excellent preacher ; he was certainly possessed of a rich treasure of all polite and useful learning, both in languages and in the sciences. He had an admirable way of communicating his thoughts to others ; he always did it with great ease and clearness, making every thing plain and pleasant to the learner. In the account of his life you are told, That he taught his eldest daughter the Hebrew tongue, when she was but seven years old, by an English Hebrew grammar, which he composed on purpose for her, and that she went so far as to be able readily to read and construe an Hebrew psalm.

While he took care to give so extraordinary an education to his daughters, we may assure ourselves he could not be wanting to his son, an only son, given up to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ, and one that was no less capable of improvement, than desirous of it. His father neglected no opportunity to cultivate such a mind ; he spared no pains ; and I have some

reasons to believe, few young ministers are better qualified for that work, when they enter upon it, than Mr. Matthew Henry was, when he left his father's house; and it is no disparagement to his after studies, or to the conduct of those under whose care he was placed, if I venture to say, the helps he had for furnishing himself in the knowledge of things human and divine in his father's house, contributed more to his fitness for the ministry, than all the advantages he enjoyed in any other place.

And that he was well pleased under his father's erudition, is very evident from that short hint he has given us in the account of his life, p. 101. where he says, "Mr. Philip Henry had so great a kindness for the universities, and valued so much the mighty advantages of improvement there, that he advised all his friends, who designed their children for scholars, to send them thither for many years after the change; but long experience altered his mind, and he chose rather to keep his own son at home with him, than to venture him into the snares and temptations of the university."

And certainly, in that way of education that his father chose for him, he not only escaped the snares of the public universities, but made advances in all useful learning, equal to most that have been trained up in those famous nurseries of science; which yet must be imputed to his uncommon capacity and diligence, and to that blessing of God that always attended him.

He was expert in the learned languages, and especially in the Hebrew, which had been made familiar to him from his childhood. He never cared to make any ostentation of it, but he did not fail to make use of it in his study of the scriptures, which, from his first to his last, was his most delightful employment.

His wife and kind father was willing to deny himself for his son's advantage; and being obliged often to be abroad preaching the word, in season and out of season, to the plain people round about, he sent his son to London in the year 1680, and placed him in the family, and under the care of that holy, faithful minister, Mr. Thomas Doolittle, who then lived at Islington.

There went with him a young gentleman related to him, and most dearly beloved by him, Mr. Robert Bosier, who had lived some time with him at Broad Oak. Mr. Bosier was some years older than Mr. Matthew Henry, but he did

not think his young kinsman unworthy of his most intimate friendship. There was a very manifest suitableness in their genius, their temper, and their principles, such as would not have failed to have recommended them to each other, though there had been no relation between them; but when their friendship was strengthened by so many bonds, it is not to be wondered at if they were so much endeared to each other; and so indeed they were. I never heard Mr. Henry mention his cousin Bosier, but with some distinguishing mark of affection. If you meet with his name in any of Mr. Henry's papers, something is added, that plainly enough shews he was ever fresh and precious to him.

Mr. Bosier had spent some time in Oxford, and had been a commoner in Edmund's-hall; but he chose to leave that place, and come into Mr. Philip Henry's family, and there continued for some years, designing himself for the service of the Lord Jesus in the ministry.

Mr. Matthew Henry must needs promise himself great satisfaction and pleasure in such a companion. It alleviated both his own grief and his parents at their parting, that he had so wise and so cordial a friend to be with him when they were absent; but God was pleased to deprive him in a little time of this his friend, even when his continuance with him seemed most desirable. They had not been many weeks together at Idlington, before Mr. Bosier was seized with a fever, and, in a few days, died of it, to the great grief of all that knew him, but especially of this his dear kinsman and colleague, who now seemed to have lost the better half of himself. Mr. Henry the elder gives this account of him, "Mr. Bosier was a young man of pregnant parts, great industry, and exemplary seriousness and piety, likely to have been an eminent instrument of good in his day. His friends and relations promised themselves much comfort in him; but we know who performeth the thing that is appointed for us, and giveth not an account of any of his matters."

How long Mr. Matthew Henry continued with Mr. Doolittle after Mr. Bosier's death, I cannot tell. I am informed by the Rev. Mr. Samuel Bury, who was contemporary with him there, that when Mr. Bosier died of that malignant fever, the greatest part of twenty-eight pupils that Mr. Doolittle then had with him were visited with the same distemper, and several of them narrowly escaped with their lives, of which number he was one, plucked as a brand out of the fire,

God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on many others, to whom God has made him a great blessing: and though he is frequently struggling with the distempers incident to his weak and decaying constitution, yet he hath obtained favour of the Lord, to continue "testifying to all repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

Mr. Bury remembers very well, that when he was but a school-boy, he was possessed with a great veneration for the family at Broad Oak, "being (as he says) the most honourable and excellent for practical religion in all those parts." When Mr. Matthew Henry and he met at Islington, the respect Mr. Henry had for Mr. Bury's father, that faithful, useful, aged minister, and their being near countrymen, engaged them in a strict and familiar friendship, which continued to the last.

Mr. Bury declares he was never better pleased, while he was at Mr. Doolittle's, than when he was in young Mr. Henry's company; he had such a favour of religion always upon his spirit, was of such a cheerful temper, so diffusive of all knowledge, so ready in the scripture, so pat in all his petitions in every emergency, so full and clear in all his performances, abating that at first he had almost an unimaginable quickness of speech, which afterwards he corrected, as well for his own sake as for the benefit of others. "He was (says he) to me a most desirable friend, and I love heaven the better since he went thither."

Mr. Bury observes, that when they were at Islington, the iniquity of the times was such, as to oblige Mr. Doolittle to remove almost immediately to Battersea, and soon after to disperse his pupils into private families at Clapham, to which place he thinks Mr. Henry did not follow them.

Another of Mr. Henry's fellow-students, the Rev. Mr. Henry Chandler of Bath, in a very kind letter which I have lately received from him, writes thus of Mr. Henry: "It is now thirty-five years since I had the happiness of being in the same house with Mr. Henry, so that it is impossible I should recollect the several passages that fixed in me such an honourable idea of him, that nothing can efface while life and reason lasts. This I perfectly well remember, that for serious piety, and the most obliging behaviour, he was universally beloved by all the house. We were, I remember, near thirty pupils, when Mr. Henry graced and entered the family; and I do not remember that ever I heard one of the number speak

word to his disparagement. I am sure it was the common opinion, that he was as sweet tempered, courteous, and obliging a gentleman as could come into an house; his going from us was universally lamented."

After he left Mr. Doolittle, he returned again to his father's house, pursuing his studies with great application, and eminently growing in wisdom and grace. I take it to be about the time of his return to Broad Oak, (for it was in the year 1682) that he drew up a memorial of the mercies he had received from God. I have already given you an account of one which he had made when he was but thirteen years old; and now that seven years more had been added to his life, in which he had received many tokens of the continued kindness of God, he made this thankful acknowledgment of them, and signed it with his own hand, under the title of Mercies received.

"1. That I am endued with a rational immortal soul, capable of serving God here, and enjoying him hereafter, and was not made as the beasts that perish.

2. That having the powers and faculties, the exercise of them has been no ways obstructed by frenzies, lunacy, &c. but happily continued in their primitive, nay happily advanced to greater vigour and activity.

3. That I have all my senses; that I was neither born, nor by accident made, blind, or deaf, or dumb, either in whole or in part.

4. That I have a complete body, with all its parts; that I am not lame or crooked, either through the original or providential want, defect, or dislocation of any part or member.

5. That I was formed and curiously fashioned by an All-wise hand in the womb, and there kept, nourished, and preserved by the same gracious hand till the appointed time.

6. That at the time appointed, I was brought forth into the world, the living child of a living mother; and that though means were wanting, yet he that can work without means was not.

7. That I have ever since been comfortably provided for with bread to eat, and raiment to put on, not for necessity only, but for ornament and delight, and that without my pains and care.

8. That I have had a very great measure of health, the sweetest of all temporal mercies; and that when infectious

diseases have been abroad, I have hitherto been preserved from them.

9. That when I have been visited with sickness, it hath been in measure, and health hath been restored to me, when a brother dear, and companion as dear, hath been taken away at the same time, and by the same sickness.

10. That I have been kept and protected from many dangers that I have been exposed to by night and by day, at home and abroad, especially in journeys.

11. That I have had comfortable accommodation, as to house, lodging, fuel, &c. and have been a stranger to the wants of many thousands in that kind.

12. That I was born to a competency of estate in the world, so that (as long as God pleases to continue it) I am likely to be on the giving, and not on the receiving hand.

13. That I have had, and still have comfort more than ordinary in relations; that I am blessed with such parents as few have, and sisters also that I have reason to rejoice in.

14. That I have had a liberal education, having a capacity for, and been bred up to the knowledge of the languages, arts, and sciences; and that, through God's blessing on my studies, I have made some progress therein.

15. That I have been born in a place and time of gospel light; that I have had the scriptures, and means for understanding them, by daily expositions and many good books; and that I have had a heart to give myself to and delight in the study of them.

16. That I have been hitherto enabled so to demean myself, as to gain a share in the love and prayers of God's people.

17. That I was in my infancy brought within the pale of the visible church in my baptism.

18. That I had religious education, the principles of religion instilled into me with my very milk, and from a child have been taught the good knowledge of God.

19. That I have been endued with a good measure of praying gifts, being enabled to express my mind to God in prayer, in words of my own, not only alone, but as the mouth of others.

20. That God hath inclined my heart to devote and dedicate myself to him, and to his service, and the service of his church in the work of the ministry, if ever he shall please to use me.

21. That I have had so many sweet and precious opportunities and means of grace, sabbaths, sermons, sacraments, and have enjoyed not only the ordinances themselves, the shell, but communion with God, the kernel.

22. That I have good hopes, through grace, that being chosen of God from eternity, I was in the fulness of time called, and that good work begun in me, which I trust God will perform.

23. That I have had some sight of the majesty of God, the sweetness of Christ, the evil of sin, the worth of my soul, the vanity of the world, and the reality and weight of invisible things.

24. That when I have been in doubt I have been guided, in danger I have been guarded, in temptation I have been succoured, under guilt I have been pardoned, when I have prayed, I have been heard and answered, when I have been under afflictions, they have been sanctified, and all by divine grace.

25. That I am not without hopes, that all these mercies are but the earnest of more, and pledges of better in the kingdom of glory; and that I shall rest in Abraham's bosom, world without end.

26. Lastly, Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ, the fountain and foundation of all my mercies. Amen. Halleluiahs."

Oct. 18. 1682.

Die natali.

MATTHEW HENRY.

One may easily discern this paper was only designed by him to be a witness between God and his own soul, and therefore he used a freedom in the acknowledgment of mercy beyond what he would have done in public. He was very remote from a Pharisaical vain-glorious temper; it was never his way to boast of his gifts and graces, but it became him to be sensible of what God had done for his soul; and in so large and particular a recital of the mercies of God to him, those of a spiritual nature could by no means be left out.

By this memorial it appears, that at the age of twenty he had made a very considerable progress in the knowledge of the languages, arts, and sciences; and that he had consecrated himself, and all his studies, to the service of God and the church, in the work of the ministry, if it should please God to accept him, and make use of him in it; and though after this he employed himself for some time in studies of another

nature, yet we have no reason to think he ever departed from this his purpose, of making the ministry the business of his life.

Being now at his father's house, that house of God and prayer to which the good people in those parts used so often to resort, he began to be very much taken notice of by them; his excellent affable temper, his quick apprehension, solid judgment, and lively affections in religious duties, endeared him to all his father's friends; they coveted his company, and were delighted with it. He despised not the meanest of them, but was free and ready on all occasions to visit them, to pray with them, to discourse with them about their spiritual concerns; and he could do it very experimentally and affectionately, and with great acceptance, far beyond his years.

His excellent father, though for some years after he was silenced he was very loath to give any offence to the public ministry, yet thought it his duty to accept of the indulgence which was granted by the king in the year 1672; he threw open his doors, and made his neighbours welcome to partake of his spiritual things. They gladly accepted the privileges offered them, and met together to worship God in a full congregation. Of these there were some families of good account, such as Mr. Lloyd of Bryn, Mr. Benion of Ash, Mr. Henry's kinsman, Mr. Yates of Darnford, Mr. Higginson and Mr. Eddowes of Whitchurch, and several others, persons of very good judgment, temper, and conversation. These adhered to Mr. Philip Henry's ministry, after the indulgence was recalled; and as they had a great affection for Mr. Matthew Henry from his childhood, so now, when he was grown up, and had made such advances both in divine and human knowledge, they were exceedingly pleased with his company; they rejoiced to see such a son treading in the steps of such a father, and hoped their families would have cause to bless God for it; and he took pleasure in conversing with them to the last; his memory is still precious, and will be so to those few of them that yet survive.

There were other families of eminent note in the adjacent parts where Mr. Philip Henry used to visit, and his ministry was highly valued by them; these were all very glad of his son's acquaintance and conversation. In that one parish of Baschurch, about ten miles from Broad Oak, the parish out of which that humble, good, and holy minister Mr. Edmund Laurence was ejected by the act of uniformity, there were

several families of distinction that held fast their profession, and gladly entertained the ejected ministers, not being ashamed of their chain, for which they deserve a greater honour than to be mentioned in these memoirs.

It must not be forgotten, that such gentlemen as Thomas Corbet of Stanwardine, Esq; Rowland Hunt of Boreatton, Esq; George Clive of Walford, Esq; and Mr. Harris of Prescot, had always a high esteem for Mr. Philip Henry; were glad to receive him into their houses, and to attend upon his ministry whenever they had an opportunity for it. All these lived in the same parish; and though they generally frequented the place of public worship, where they had a sober, judicious, and peaceable minister, the Reverend Mr. Hudson, yet they had often sermons preached in their own houses by the nonconformists that lived near them, sometimes on week-days, sometimes on the Lord's day, out of the time of public worship; and I have often seen some of Mr. Hudson's family, his wife, and children, present on such occasions.

And here, though I foresee I am like to incur the reader's censure, I cannot let pass this occasion of acknowledging the goodness of God to myself, in leading me into an acquaintance with these worthy religious families. It is now about twenty-nine years ago, that Dr. Joseph Hanmer, Rector of Mar- wheel, my father's friend, recommended me to the friendship of Mr. Corbet of Stanwardine; I had then but just entered upon the ministry, and had the opportunity of preaching some times at the chapel of Cocsbu, near Mr. Corbet's house. One Mr. Lewis, a young minister, that I think was sometime in Mr. Henry's family, had been removed by death from them; he had conformed, but remained a very serious, holy, humble man, greatly beloved in the family of Stanwardine, with whom he lived, and by them his death was greatly lamented; he died very young, but ready and ripe for heaven.

I had not preached long here, but umbrage was taken by the parson of Elsemere, and complaints made at the spiritual court, which made it adviseable for me to desist; but I continued for about two years to be very much in those parts, sometimes at Stanwardine, and sometimes at Boreatton; and I have often recorded it as one of the greatest mercies of my life, that I ever knew those families, in which I saw religion in its power and in its native beauty, without partiality, affectation, or ostentation. I met with the kindest and most

friendly treatment. I was greatly encouraged in the service of God by what I observed in them, and by the friendship into which they were pleased to admit me. There it was that I had the opportunity of being acquainted with Mr. Philip Henry and his family, and with Mr. Tallents, and Mr. Bryon of Shrewsbury, Mr. Taylor of Wern, and Mr. James Owen, then of Oswestry, and several others, men of great learning and eminent holiness.

The providence of God has made a very great alteration in that parish, and in some of those families that I have mentioned; they are not so with God as then they were; the fashion of this world passes away. Some of them will be ready to say, "Call me no more Naomi, but call me Marah;" but yet I believe God has made with them and theirs an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, in which they shall find all their salvation and all their desire, although he makes them not to grow. God is not unrighteous to forget their work and labour of love, which they have shewed towards his name; I believe there is mercy in store for them, and their posterity after them.

Mr. Matthew Henry has told the world, in the account of his father's life, how intimate a friendship there was between him and that learned and religious gentleman, Rowland Hunt of Boreatton, Esq; who married the Lady Frances, daughter to the Right Hon. the Lord Paget, an excellent person, a great ornament and blessing to the family. Mr. Philip Henry was esteemed by this family as their pastor; he used once a quarter to spend the Sabbath with them, and administer the Lord's supper to them, and to their children with them.

To this family Mr. Matthew Henry frequently resorted after he first came down from London, and here he was always very acceptable and welcome. Mr. Hunt was so well apprized of his great capacity for yet further improvements, that he advised his father to let him return to London again, and enter himself in one of the inns of court, and spend some time in the study of the law. I do not think it was Mr. Hunt's purpose in this to draw him off from his design of being a minister; but the times were then very dark, he was young, and had time enough to mix that with his other studies; the knowledge of the law would not only be convenient for one that was heir to an handsome estate, but might be of use for the better understanding the nature of the divine

law and government, and the forensic terms so much used in the holy Scriptures, and in other divinity-books, both ancient and modern.

Mr. Hunt's advice was approved of both by the father and the son, and accordingly Mr. Matthew Henry went to Gray's Inn, towards the latter end of April, in the year 1685. And though sometimes the discouragement of the times made him a little doubtful, yet he did not depart from his purpose of making divinity his principal study and business. I find about this time some of his friends and very near relations could not help discovering their fears lest he should now be taken off from the thoughts of the ministry. They considered he was now engaging himself in a new sort of acquaintance, and entering into a society of men where there are not many that have a true sense of the nature and dignity of the ministerial office; they could not be without some apprehensions, that he might find his own mind gradually alienated from a work so little esteemed by men, who have generally the advantages of birth, learning, and wit, to give their sentiments the greater efficacy; and it must be owned, to a mind less firm and fixed than his, it might have given the turns which they feared; and we have many instances where it has done so.

But his heart was bent for God, and established betimes by divine grace. As it was his happiness to fall into the acquaintance of several young gentlemen in London, that were then students of the law, very exemplary for their sobriety, diligence, religion, and good temper; and as the like qualifications in him led him to desire their company, so they soon discerned that in him that made them very gladly to admit him into their most intimate conversation.

Several of these gentleman are still living, some are dead; none will think themselves or their relations dishonoured by being reckoned among the friends of Mr. Matthew Henry. Mr. Turner of Canterbury, Mr. Edward Harley, Mr. Dunch, Mr. Birch, Mr. Edward, and Mr. Gilbert Horfeman, were the persons whose friendship Mr. Henry highly valued; he often mentions them with great respect and honour, and their mutual friendship continued to the last.

Here he went on in his usual diligence, improving his time by close study, and diligent researches into the nature of the divine and human laws; he loved to look into the body of the civil law, and did not neglect to acquaint himself with the municipal laws of his own country. His proficiency was

soon observed, and it was the opinion of those that there conversed with him, that his great industry, quick apprehension, good judgment, tenacious memory, and ready utterance, would have rendered him very eminent in the practice of the law, if he had betaken himself to it as his business; but he was true to his first and early resolution, and therefore, while he was at Gray's Inn, he not only promoted social prayer and religious conference with his particular friends, but would sometimes expound the scripture to them; and when he had left them, he bid them farewell, in an excellent lively discourse from 2 Thess. ii. 1. "By the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together to him," the hope of that blessed meeting he recommended to himself and them, as their greatest comfort, now they were parting one from another.

What a serious sense and favour of religion he retained while he was in the inns of court, will appear by a letter he wrote from thence to his dear and loving friend, Mr. George Illidge of Nantwich, dated March 1. 1686, which is as follows.

"Dear Friend,

"I think I remember, when I last saw you, I partly promised to write you from hence, which I doubt I should either have forgot, or deferred the performance of, had I not been lately minded of it in a letter from one of my sisters: and now I have put pen to paper, to perform my promise, what shall I write? News we have little or none considerable, and you know I was never a good newsmonger; and to fill a letter with idle impertinent compliments, is very useless, and will pass but ill in the account another day; for sure, if idle words must be accounted for, idle letters will not be left out of the reckoning. What if I should therefore (having no other business at present) give you a few serious lines, which may, perhaps, be of some spiritual advantage to your soul? I have been lately thinking of some great scripture truths or principles, the firm practical belief of which would be of great use to a Christian, and have a mighty influence upon the right ordering of his conversation; and they are some such as these:

"1. That 'all things are naked and open unto him with whom we have to do,' Heb. iv. 13. A firm belief of God's all-seeing eye always upon us, wherever we are, and whatever

we are doing, would be a mighty aweband upon the spirit, to keep it serious and watchful. Dare I omit such a known duty, or commit such a known sin, while I am under the eye of a just and holy God, who hates sin, and cannot endure to look on iniquity? It was a significant name which Hagar gave to the well where God appeared unto her, Gen. xvi. 14. Beer-lahai-roi, the well of him that lives and sees me; for she said, ver. 13. Thou God seekest me. This would be a very seasonable thought, when we are either entering into duty or into temptation, to lift up our heart in these words, Thou God seekest me; and therefore let duty be carefully done, and sin carefully avoided, considering, that he who sees all now, will tell all shortly before angels and men, in the day when the secrets of all hearts shall be made manifest, Luke xii. 2.

“ 2. That ‘our adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about continually, seeking whom he may devour,’ 1 Pet. v. 8. We do not see him, and therefore we are apt to be secure; but certainly it is so, and therefore we should never be off our watch. What folly is it for us to be slumbering and sleeping, while such a cruel, crafty enemy is waking and watching, and ready to do us a mischief? You know when Saul slept, he lost his spear and cruse of water; many a Christian has lost his strength and comfort by sleeping.

“ That ‘the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, teacheth us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly,’ Titus ii. 11, 12. The gospel, as it is a gospel of grace, requires a holy conversation. Christ died to save his people from their sins, and not in their sins. The gospel hath its commands as well as its promises and privileges, and therefore there is such a thing as a gospel-becoming conversation, Philip. i. 27. living up to gospel love as well as gospel light.

“ 4. That ‘Jesus Christ died to deliver us from this present evil world,’ Gal. i. 4. We are apt to think that Christ died to deliver us only from hell, and if that be done we are well enough: no, Christ died to deliver us from this world; so, if our hearts are glued to present things, and our affections fixed upon them, we do directly thwart the great design of our Lord Jesus Christ in coming to save us.

“ 5. That ‘we are not under the law, but under grace,’ Rom. vi. 14. This is a mighty encouragement to us to abound in all manner of gospel obedience, to consider that we are not under the law that required personal perfect obe-

dience, and pronounced a curse for the least failure, but under the covenant of grace, which accepts the willing mind, and makes sincerity our perfection. What a sweet word is grace! what a favour does it leave upon the lips! and to be under grace, under the sweet and easy rule of grace, how comfortable is it!

“ 6. That the soul is the man, and that condition of life is the best for us that is best for our souls. It fares with the man as it fares with his soul; he is the truly healthful man whose soul prospers and is in health; he is the truly rich man, not who is rich in houses, land, and money, but who is rich in faith, and an heir of the kingdom; those are our best friends that are friends to our souls, and those are our worst enemies that are enemies to our souls; for the soul is the man, and if the soul be lost, all is lost.

“ 7. That ‘we have here no continuing city,’ Heb. xiii. 14. We are in this world as in an inn, and must be gone shortly; why should we then conform ourselves to this world, or cumber ourselves with it? Should we not then fit loose to it, as we do at an inn? And what if we have but ill accommodation? it is but an inn, it will be better at home; if our lodging here be hard and cold, it is no great matter; our lodging in our Father’s house will be soft and warm enough.

“ 8. That ‘every man at his best estate is altogether vanity,’ Psal. xxxix. 5. We ourselves are so, and therefore we must not dote on any temporal enjoyments; we carry our lives as well as our other comforts in our hands, and know not how soon they may slip through our fingers; every one is vanity, therefore cease from man, from fearing him, and from trusting in him.

“ 9. That ‘God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil,’ Eccl. xii. 14. Every man must shortly give an account to God; the serious thoughts of this would engage us to do nothing now which will not pass well in our accounts then.

“ 10. That ‘the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord,’ Rom. vi. 23. Heaven and hell are great things indeed, and should be much upon our hearts, and improved by us as a spur of constraint to put us upon duty, and a bridle of restraint to keep us from sin. We should labour to see reality and weight in invisible things, and live as those that must be somewhere for

ever; to see hell the wages and due desert of sin, and heaven the free gift of God through Jesus Christ.

“Many other such truths might be mentioned, which those that are acquainted with the Scriptures, and with their own hearts, need not be directed to. It would be of use to a Christian to take some one such truth into his mind in the morning, and upon occasion in the day to be thinking frequently of it, and to say, ‘This is the truth of the day; this is to be an answer to this day’s temptations; this is to be a spur to this day’s duties; and this is to be the subject of this day’s meditation, and of this day’s discourse, as we have opportunity.’ I am apt to think such a course would be very beneficial; hereby a good stock of truths might be treasured up against a time of need, and we might be able to bring forth things new and old for the benefit of others; for certainly it is our duty, as we have ability and opportunity, to help our friends and neighbours in their spiritual necessities, to strengthen the weak, confirm the wavering, direct the doubting, and comfort the feeble-minded, to say to them that are of a fearful heart, be strong.

“Discourse to this purpose, how profitable would it be both to ourselves and others, and how much better would it pass in our account another day, than a great deal of that vain impertinent talk which fills up the time of too many professors when they come together; and I fear it is a fault more acknowledged than amended.

“I remember to have read, that when the famous Bishop Usher and Dr. Preston, who were intimate friends, were talking together, after much discourse of learning and other things, the bishop would say, ‘Come, doctor, one word of Christ before we part.’ Christians, that owe their all to Christ, should be often talking of him; and surely those that know the worth of souls, cannot but be concerned for their ignorant careless neighbours; which concernedness should put us upon doing all we can to help them out of that condition; and if there be any that are asking the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, pray tell them the way. Tell them,

“1. There is but one gate into this way, and that is the strait gate of sound conversion.

“2. Tell them that the way is narrow, that there is not elbow-room for their lusts; let them know the worst of it, and that those that would be good soldiers of Christ must endure hardness.

“ 3. Tell them, notwithstanding this, it is a way of pleasantness, it gives spiritual, though it prohibits sensual pleasures.

“ 4. Tell them, there is life eternal at the end ; and let them be assured, that one hour of joy in heaven will make them amends for an age of trouble upon earth ; one sheaf of that harvest will be recompence enough for a seed-time of tears, Pl. cxxvi. 5, 6.

“ I am at present somewhat indisposed, and have written confusedly, and therefore I would have you keep it to yourself. I hope you will not forget me at the throne of grace, for I have need of your prayers. Give my affectionate respects to your wife, and mother and sister ; to Mrs. Elisabeth Wilson, who, I take for granted, is with you ; to Mr. Hopkins, my aunt Borroughs, and Richard Gill, and all the rest of my very good friends, if with you, as if particularly named. I have nothing more to add, but to commend you all to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.

I am your real friend,

MATT. HENRY.

“ P. S. I wrote to Mr. Wilson a fortnight ago, but have heard nothing from him.”

This letter, you see, was not designed by Mr. Henry to be communicated to any, much less to be made thus public ; but though he complains of writing in confusion, being indisposed, I think it worth any one's perusal, as it contains in it a chain of great and good principles, and a serious call to the neglected duty of Christian converse : you may discern it in the frame of his own spirit, and what he had most at heart in the days of his youth, and in the midst of that polite conversation he then enjoyed ; one may see how wise and faithful a friend he was, and how well worth the while it was to keep up a correspondence with him.

That Mr. Wilson, whom he mentions in the postscript, was that dear and intimate friend and brother of his, and I must say of mine too, that spent his four last years at Warwick, son to the learned and judicious author of the treatises called *Nehushtan* and *Judicium Discretionis*, &c. He was not inferior to his father either for gifts or graces ; the most beautiful mind and temper in one of the most comely persons

that I ever knew. He was born in Chester the same year with Mr. Henry; he was educated at London with Mr. Thomas Row; lived for some time afterwards in Mr. Philip Henry's house; was the first minister of the Presbyterian denomination in Warwick; died of a consumption in his thirty-second year, but did more service for God and the souls of men in that short term of life than many, even good men, have done in twice that number of years. And having laid such a foundation of serious religion in Warwick, as I hope will still abide, he went to heaven in full assurance and a holy triumph, never to be forgotten by those of us that were eye-witnesses of the end of his conversation.

The same year that this letter to Mr. Illidge bears date, I had the opportunity of going to London with my worthy friend Mr. Corbet of Stanwardine, who took up his son, and entered him at Gray's Inn; then it was that I first saw Mr. Henry. Mr. Corbet sent his servant to acquaint him that he was come to town, and Mr. Henry immediately came to wait on him at his inn at Fetter Lane, and was very ready to assist him in every thing relating to his son, a young gentleman of very pregnant parts, who, by the blessing of God, might have been a great support to the family, but was taken away by the small-pox, not long after he had put on his barrister's gown.

What I had heard of Mr. Henry in those two families of Boreatton and Stanwardine, had made me very desirous to be favoured with his acquaintance, into which I found it no difficult thing to be admitted. I was much with him at Gray's Inn, and extremely pleased with his ingenious and instructive conversation.

During his continuance at Gray's Inn, he seldom failed to write twice a-week to his father, and heard once a-week from him. In all his letters he is full of expressions of affection and duty to his good parents, and most tender respect to his sisters. He used to give his father an account of all remarkable occurrences, which he did with great judgment and exactness, and yet with all the caution the difficulties of those times required. But that which ever had a considerable room in his letters, was an account of the sermons he heard both on the Lord's day and week-days, from the most celebrated preachers about the town; among whom he seemed to be best pleased with Dr. Stillingfleet, then at St. Andrew's, Holborn, for his serious practical preaching, and with Dr. Tillotson's

lectures at Lawrence-Jury, for the admirable sermons preached against Popery: he always mentioned the texts they preached upon, and gave a short scheme of their sermons.

But though he blessed God for such helps, he complains very sensibly of the want of those opportunities he used to have in his father's house, the heavenly manna, as he often calls it, his Broad Oak sabbaths; and expresses his earnest desires to be restored to the enjoyment of those privileges which had been more beneficial to his soul than any thing he met with in London, though he attended upon the best men and means that were then to be found.

In the month of June 1686, he came down from London to Broad Oak, and stayed some months in the country; and there he soon made it appear, that his study of the law, and his London conversation, had not drawn his heart away from the study of the Scriptures, or his designs for the ministry. He now began to preach pretty often as a candidate for that work, and every where met with great acceptance and encouragement.

About that time it was that he went for some days to Nantwich, to that dear and intimate friend of his, Mr. George Illidge, of whom mention has been already made. This young man (for he was then very young) was singled out by divine grace from his father's house, where he had not enjoyed much help for his soul; he frequented the ministry of Mr. Philip Henry, and very much improved by it. His seriousness and zeal made him always very welcome at Broad Oak, and procured him great respect from all the family. He was very forward to promote religion among his neighbours, after he had felt the power of it in his own soul. He invited Mr. Henry to come and spend some days with him at Nantwich, which he readily complied with, and preached every night to a considerable company. Some persons that had lived very loose and profligate lives attended through curiosity, and were very much startled at what they heard. One instance given is very remarkable: Mr. Matthew Henry preached the last evening, from Job xxxvii. 22. "With God is terrible majesty." Mr. Illidge saw one man there that had been notoriously wicked, and went the next morning to his house to see what impressions the word had made, and found the man and his wife all in tears; the man under great convictions of sin, and sense of his miserable state, the woman wept to see her husband weep. As soon as he could

Heak, he told Mr. Illidge what work the word of God had made in his conscience, and what dreadful apprehensions of the majesty and of the wrath of God he had been under that morning. His kind neighbour gave him the best advice he could; told him, that notwithstanding his dreadful apprehension of his state, it was now more hopeful than ever; that he hoped these tears and trouble were in order to comfort, but yet told him plainly the danger there was lest his wicked companions should either entice him or reproach him into their company and ways again, and then his state would be worse than before. This he endeavoured to warn him against; and having prayed, he left him, and presently sent an account of it to Broad Oak, and desired directions from thence how to deal with this poor convinced sinner. The man went on under a great concern about his eternal state, taught his wife to read, set up prayer in his family, went often with Mr. Illidge to Broad Oak, and after some time was admitted to the Lord's supper. There appeared a great change in him; he would sometimes speak of the joy he felt in his soul at the remembrance of what God had done for him. Thus it continued for some years; his wife, in the mean time, died, to all appearance a good Christian. He afterwards was guilty of very sad backslidings, from which it does not appear that he is recovered to this day. His soul's friends long to see him remembering from whence he is fallen, and repenting, and doing his first works. Christ was sent for the fall, and for the rising again of many in Israel.

The success that God gave to young Mr. Henry's preaching, fully determined him to make it his business, and henceforward he omitted no opportunity that offered itself of doing good to souls; and about this time some occasion led him to Chester, where the good people having heard of him, invited him to preach to them in the evening, the liberty being not yet granted. He readily consented to it, and for two or three evenings together, he preached at the house of Mr. Henthorne the sugar-baker, and at two other houses; and then it was that he contracted an acquaintance with some of the most eminent Dissenters in Chester, which laid the groundwork of his great usefulness among them for so many years.

This specimen they had received of Mr. Matthew Henry's ministerial gifts made them earnestly desirous to have him for their minister, they having lost, about two years before, two faithful aged ministers, Mr. Cook and Mr. Hall. Mr. Har-

vey, another minister advanced in years, still lived among them, and preached very privately; but all those that belonged to Mr. Cook and Mr. Hall had not joined with him in constant communion.

Some of these hearing that there was a disposition in the government to grant indulgence to the Dissenters, went over, about the latter end of the year, to Broad Oak, to solicit Mr. Matthew Henry, if liberty should be granted, to come and settle among them. He was then in the twenty-fifth year of his age, determined for the ministry, and thought there was the voice of Providence in it; and having advised with his father about it, he gave them some encouragement to expect a compliance with their desire, always provided Mr. Harvey would give his consent to it; but at the same time told them, he was very speedily to return to London, and must reside there for some months.

They were willing to receive him upon his own terms, and in his own time. He went up to London accordingly, with the only son of his worthy friend Mr. Hunt of Boreatton: they set out the 24th of January 1686-7, and at Coventry met with the news that there had been a great fire at Gray's Inn, where Mr. Henry had a chamber, and in the same place, Holborn's Court, while the gentlemen were at their revels; on which he writes from thence to his father, 'I expect the small effects I have there are all lost; but, at his arrival at London, found that, by the care of his chamber-fellow, most of them were saved.'

The first most material news he heard in London was, that the king had empowered some gentlemen to grant out licences directed to the bishops and their officers, to the judges, justices, and all others whom it may concern. The licences were to this effect, That the king's pleasure is, that the several persons named in a schedule annexed be not prosecuted or molested, 1. For not taking the oaths of allegiance and supremacy; or, 2. Upon the prerogative writ for 20*l.* a month, or upon outlawries, or *excomm. capiend.* for the said causes; or, 3. For not coming to church; or, 4. For not receiving the sacrament; or, 5. By reason of their conviction for recusancy or exercise of their religion, a command to stay proceedings already begun for any of the causes aforesaid. The price of one of these licences was 10*l.* for a single person; but if several joined, the price was 16*l.* and eight persons might join in taking out one licence.

There were not very many Dissenters that took out these licences; but the disposition of the court being sufficiently understood thereby, many of them began to meet publicly. In the latter end of February, Mr. Henry writes to his father, "That Mr. Faldo, a worthy minister of the Congregational persuasion, had preached publicly in Mr. Selater's meeting-house in Moorfields, both morning and afternoon, to many hundreds of people, who were much pleased at the reviving of the work."

These openings of a door of liberty made Mr. Henry's friends at Chester often put him in mind of their expectations, and he was not less mindful of his engagements to them, though sometimes he had some questionings in his own mind, whether he had done wisely in engaging himself to them: and when his resolutions for the ministry were generally known in London, the reverend and learned Mr. Woodcock came to him, and told him, "He was desirous to engage him in a lecture which was a setting up chiefly for young persons;" but he, with modesty and thankfulness, declined that offer, saying, "He thought his service might be most wanted in the country, and might be more suitable there than in or about the city."

He now began seriously to weigh the business of ordination, and desired the counsel and assistance of some ministers about it, to whom he was best known. Mr. Tallents was not then gone down again to Shrewsbury, and Mr. James Owen was come up occasionally from Oswestry to London; and it was a great comfort to him that he had such cordial friends as they were, and persons that had known him from his childhood, to consult with on an occasion of so solemn a nature; and he had all possible encouragement from them to go on with his design.

He addressed himself to his duty with all seriousness. I find among his papers a discourse, I suppose intended chiefly for his own use, about devoting one's self to the ministry, from 1 Tim. iv. 15. "Give thyself wholly to them;" in which he states the nature and the several parts of the ministerial work, and what it is for a man to give himself wholly to them—to be wholly in them.

Having thus counted the cost, and wisely weighed the work that he was taking upon him, he proceeds to inquire into his own soul, the dispositions and designs of his heart as to the word of the ministry; and in this he was very strict and par-

ticular, as one that was afraid of being deceived. This paper bears the title of "Serious Self-examination before Ordination," and it begins thus :

"That it is very requisite for a man to examine himself seriously at such a time, will readily be granted by those that consider the nature of the ordinance, and of that work into which it is a solemn entrance.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

"It is worth the while for a man at such a time deliberately to ask himself, and having asked, conscientiously to answer the following questions.

"Quest. 1. What am I?

"This is a needful question, because in ordination I give up myself to God in a particular manner; and will God accept the torn, and the blind, and the lame? Surely no; the sacrifice must be searched before it was offered, that it might be sure to fit its end. Now, though the truth of grace be nor perhaps necessary to the *esse* of a ministry, (for Judas himself was an apostle) yet it is necessary to the *bene esse*; a man cannot be a good minister without it: and therefore come, my soul, let us inquire what am I? and let the inquiry be strict and serious, for a mistake here is fatal.

"1. Have I ever been inwardly convinced of the lost and undone condition in which I was born; that I was by nature a child of wrath even as others? Did I ever see myself wallowing in my blood, in a forlorn, outcast, helpless state, lost and ruined for ever without Christ?

"2. Was I ever deeply humbled before the Lord for the original sin that I was born in, and the numberless actual transgressions in heart and life that I have been guilty of? Hath sin been bitter to my soul? hath my heart been broken for it? and hath my sorrow been of the right kind? hath the sight of a broken Saviour broken my heart?

"3. Have I sincerely closed with the Lord Jesus Christ by a true and lively faith, taken him to be mine, and resigned up myself to him to be his? Have I accepted of Christ upon gospel terms, to be my Prince to rule, and Saviour to save me? Have I renounced all others, and resolved to cleave to the Lord Jesus Christ, let what will come? Is Christ precious to me? is he dearer to me than any thing in the world

besides? Could I be freely willing to part with all for Christ, and count every thing but loss that I may win Christ?

“ 4. Have I a real hatred of every sin, in myself as well as in others? Have I no beloved lust which I would have spared, no darling corruption which I would have to remain unmortified? Doth sin appear sin in my eyes, and can I say with David, that I hate every false way? Are the remainders of indwelling corruption a burden to me? Do I long to be rid of sin? Are my resolutions sincere, and my endeavours serious against sin, and all appearances of it, and that because it is against God?

“ 5. Have I a real love to holiness? Do I press after it, and earnestly desire to be more holy, using holy ordinances for this end, that I may be made thereby more and more holy? Am I fond of holy ordinances and holy people, and that because they are holy? Have I a real value for holiness wherever I see it? Do I delight in God's holy word, and that because it is holy? Do I call the holy sabbath a delight, and that because it is holy? Do I love the brethren because they are holy, and love them the better the more holy they are? Do I long to be made perfect in holiness in that other world?

“ To these weighty questions, my poor soul (though compassed about with manifold weaknesses, wants, and corruptions) doth, as in the presence of God, the searcher of hearts, give in a comfortable answer; and if these be the signs and characters of true grace, I trust my heart doth not deceive me, when it tells me, I have some sparks of it, though swimming in a sea of corruption. “ But who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And yet, as if this had been but a small thing, thou hast spoken concerning thy servant for a great while yet to come: and is this the manner of man, O Lord God!”

“ Quest. 2. What have I done?

“ This is also a needful question, that searching and examining what hath been amiss, I may repent of it, and make even reckonings in the blood of Christ, that I may not come loaded with old guilt to put on a new character, especially such a character as this. Aaron and his sons must offer a sin-offering, to make atonement, before they be consecrated, Lev. viii. 34. For he that comes near to God under the guilt of sin unrepented of, comes at his peril, and the nearer the more dangerous.

" And therefore, O my soul, what have I done? My soul cannot but answer, I have sinned, I have perverted that which is right, and it hath not profited me. And, in a serious reflection, I cannot but observe,

" 1. What a great deal of precious time I have trifled away and mispent in folly and vanity, and things that do not profit. Time is a precious talent which my Master hath entrusted me with, and yet how long hath it been buried, and how much hath it run waste!

" 2. How many precious opportunities (which are the cream of time) have I lost, and not improved, through my own carelessness; golden seasons of grace which I have enjoyed, but have let them slip, and been little bettered by them; sabbaths, sermons, sacraments, that have come and gone, and left me as they found me; my fruit hath not been answerable to the soil I have been planted in. How often have I been ignorant under enlightening means, hard and cold under softening and warming ordinances, trifling and careless when I have been dealing with God about the concerns of my soul and eternity?

" 3. How often have I broken my covenants with God, my engagements, promises, and resolutions of new and better obedience, resolved against this and that sin, and yet fallen into it again, many a time returning to folly, after God had spoken peace to me, and after I have spoken promises to God; presently after a sacrament, how have I returned to former vanity, folly, sensuality, frothiness, to former pride, passion, and worldliness, so soon have I forgot the vows of God?

" 4. How unprofitable have I been in my converse with others, how few have been the better for me, how many the worse for me, how little good have I done, how little light have I cast in the sphere wherein God hath placed me, how little have I been concerned for the souls of others, and how little useful have I been to them? how vain and light have I been many times in my words and carriage, going down the stream of folly with others, when my seriousness might have stemmed the tide? how seldom hath my speech been with grace, and how often with corruption, not seasoned with salt?

" 5. In the general, how forgetful have I been of God and his word, and of myself and my duty, and of the great concerns of my soul and eternity, living too much as if I had no God to serve, and never a soul to save?

"I might mention many particular miscarriages which I have been guilty of in heart and life, and which are known to God and my own heart; and yet, after all, "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me, O God, from secret sins; have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness, and according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out all my transgressions, for the sake of the Lord my righteousness."

"Quest. 3. From what principles do I act in this undertaking?"

"This is also a very material inquiry in every action, to ask whence it comes, especially in so great a turn of life as this.

"(1) I hope I can say that it is of faith, and I am concerned it should be so, for "whatsoever is not of faith is sin;" it is good for every man that he be fully persuaded in his own mind. Now,

"1. I am fully persuaded that Jesus Christ, as king of the church, hath appointed and established the office of the ministry, to continue in a constant succession to the end of time, for the edification of the church, and has promised to be with them always to the end of the world; so that the office of the ministry is no human invention, but a divine institution.

"2. I am fully persuaded, that no man ought to thrust himself upon the work of the ministry, without a clear call from God to it. Not that we are to expect such extraordinary calls as the apostles had, but the ordinary call by the mediation of ministers, who, as such, are authorised by Christ to try the abilities of those that offer themselves to the ministry; and, if they find them fit, then to set them apart to the work in a solemn manner, by the imposition of hands, with fasting and prayer; and that the laying on of the hands of the presbytery is the most regular way of ordination, and most agreeable to scripture.

"3. I bless God that I am pretty well satisfied with the clearness of my call to the work. Though I cannot but be sensible of great weakness and insufficiency for these things, yet I find, that what abilities God has been pleased to give me, (and let him have all the glory) do evidently look towards this work, so that if I be in any measure qualified for any service, it is for this; I find also mine own inclination strongly bent towards it, and that it hath been so ever since I knew any thing; and especially I consider, that I have

been much excited and encouraged to, it by divers (both ministers and others) able, skilful, and faithful, fit to judge, by whom my purposes have been much confirmed; all which goes a great way towards the clearing of my call; and the earnest invitation I have lately had to stated work in a particular place, doth much help to clear my call to the work in general.

“(2) I hope I can say, I act herein from a principle of true zeal for the glory of God, that this great thing I do, as I should do every thing, to the glory of God, that my light may shine, that Christ's kingdom may be advanced, the power of godliness kept up, the word of life held forth, by all which God is glorified; the desire of my soul is, that “whether I live, I may live to the Lord, or whether I die, I may die to the Lord, and that living and dying I may be the Lord's.”

“(3) I hope I can say, that I act herein from a principle of real love to precious souls, for the good of which I would gladly spend and be spent; methinks I love the precious souls of men so well, that I would fain be an instrument of convincing the unconvinced, converting the unconverted, and building up saints in holiness and comfort; I hope I know so much of the worth of souls, that I should think it a greater happiness to gain one soul to the Lord Jesus Christ, than to gain mountains of silver and gold to myself.

“Quest. 4. What are the ends that I aim at in this great undertaking?

“It is a common saying, that the end specifies the action, and therefore it is of great consequence to fix that right, that the eye may be single, for otherwise it is an evil eye; a bye and base end will certainly spoil the acceptableness of the best actions that can be performed.

“Now what is the mark I aim at in this great turn of my life; let conscience be faithful herein, and let the Searcher of hearts make me known to myself.

“1. I think I can say with confidence, that I do not design to take up the ministry as a trade to live by, or to enrich myself by, out of the greediness of filthy lucre; no, I hope I aim at nothing but souls, and if I gain those, though I should lose all my worldly comforts by it, I shall reckon myself to have made a good bargain.

“2. I think I can say with as much assurance, that my design is not to get myself a name amongst men, or to be

talked of in the world, as one that makes somewhat of a figure; no, that is a poor business. If I have but a good name with God, I think I have enough, though among men I be reviled, and have my name trampled upon as mire in the streets; I prefer the good word of my Master far before the good word of my fellow-servants.

“ 3. I can appeal to God, that I have no design in the least to maintain a party, or to keep up any schismatical faction; my heart rises against the thoughts of it, I hate dividing principles and practices, and, whatever others are, I am for peace and healing; and if my blood would be sufficient balsam, I would gladly part with the last drop of it, for the closing up of the bleeding wounds of differences that are among true Christians. Peace is such a precious jewel, that I would give any thing for it but truth. Those who are hot and bitter in their contendings for or against little things, and zealous of keeping up names of division and maintaining parties, are of a spirit which I understand not; let not my soul come into their secret.

“ My ends then are according to my principles, and I humbly appeal to God concerning the integrity of my heart in them.

“ 1. That I deliberately place the glory of my God as my highest and ultimate end; and if I can be but any ways instrumental to promote that, I shall gain my end, and have my desire. I do not design to preach myself, but as a faithful friend of the Bridegroom, to preach Christ Jesus my Lord, as the standard-bearer among ten thousands; and if I can but bring people better to know, and love, and honour Christ, I have my design.

“ 2. That, in order to the glory of God, I do sincerely aim at the good of precious souls. God is glorified when souls are benefited, and gladly would I be instrumental in that blessed work; I would not be a barren tree in a vineyard, cumbering the ground, but by God's help I would do some good in the world, and I know no greater good I can be capable of, than doing good to souls; I therefore desire to be an instrument in God's hand of softening hard hearts, humbling proud hearts, comforting sorrowful hearts; and if I may be enabled to do this, I have my desire; if God denies me this, and suffers me to labour in vain, (though I should get hundreds a-year by my labour) it would be the constant grief and trouble of my soul; and if I do not gain

souls, I shall enjoy all my other gains with very little satisfaction, though even in that case it would be some comfort, that the reward is not according to the success, but according to the faithfulness. But I seriously profess it, if I could foresee that my ministry would be wholly unprofitable, and that I should be no instrument of good to souls, though in other respects I might get enough by it, I would rather beg my bread from door to door than undertake this great work.

“ Quest. 5. What do I want ?

“ And what special things am I now to desire of God, the God of all grace ? When I know whither to go for supplies, I am concerned to inquire what my necessities are. The requests I have to put to God are such as these :

“ 1. That he would fix, confirm, and establish my heart in my dedication of myself to the work of the ministry. My carnal heart is sometimes ready to suggest to me, that I had better take some other way of living that would be less troublesome and perilous, and more pleasant and gainful ; and the devil joins issue with my heart, and sets before me the profits and preferments I might possibly have in another way, and the trouble and reproach likely to be met with in this way. Now, O that my God would restrain the tempter, and satisfy me in my choice, and furnish me with suitable considerations with which to answer such suggestions : and in order thereunto, give me believing views of eternity, having deliberately devoted myself to the work of the Lord, keep it always in the imagination of the thoughts of my heart, and establish my way before him.

“ 2. That he would, in a special manner, be present with me in the ordinance of dedication, filling my heart with such an experimental sense of the excellency of Christ, and the comforts of the Holy Ghost, as that I may have cause to remember it, by a good token, as long as I live ; that he would manifest himself to me, mark me for himself, and leave some sign behind him in my soul, that may make it evident God was there of a truth ; that he would give me a comfortable earnest of the success of my ministry, by a signal owning of me in my entrance upon it.

“ 3. That he would fit and qualify me for this great work to which he is calling me. When Saul was anointed king, ‘ God gave him another heart,’ an heart fit for kingship : I

would fain have another heart, an heart fit for ministerial work, filled with ministerial gifts and graces.

“(1) Ministerial gifts; every good gift comes from above, and therefore I look upwards for gifts of knowledge in the mysteries of religion; gifts of utterance to explain and apply myself to others, and to speak a word with boldness. I have also need of prudence and discretion to order the affairs of my ministry.

“(2) Ministerial graces; faith, love to God and souls, zeal for God’s glory and souls good; patience to do, to suffer, and to wait; an inward sense of the weight of the things I speak of. Two graces I do more especially beg of God,

“(1) Sincerity; that I may be really as I seem to be; that inward impressions may always be answerable to outward expressions in all my ministrations; that my eye may be single, my heart upright, and my ends fixed, that I may not cast the least glance at any low, bye, base end.

“(2) Humility; that God would hide pride from me, and clothe me with humility, that I may see that I have nothing (except my sins) but what I have received; that I may never please myself with the praises of men, but hand up all the praise to God, that the least workings of pride and conceitedness may be checked in me.

“4. That God would open a door of opportunity to me, and make my way plain before me, that the call I have to my work may be clear and satisfying, and that God would bless and succeed my endeavours for the good of souls.

“Quest. 6. What are my purposes and resolutions for the future?

“This is also a requisite inquiry, when I am to put on a new character, and one so honourable; what shall I do, that I may ‘walk worthy of the vocation wherewith I am called?’

“1. I purpose and resolve, by the grace of God, that I will have no more to do with the unfruitful works of darkness, seeing it will not only be my duty as a Christian, but my office as a minister, to reprove them rather. Pride, passion, worldliness, wantonness, vanity, are things the man of God must flee, 1 Tim. vi. 11. What have I to do any more with idols? what have I to do any more with sin? by the grace of God, it shall not have dominion over me. The ministerial character will add a great aggravation to every

sin, and therefore, 'O my soul! stand in awe, and sin not.'

" 2. I purpose and resolve, that, by the grace of God, I will abound more than ever in all manner of gospel obedience; that I will strive to be more humble, serious, watchful, and self-denying, and live more above the world and the things of it; that I will pray with more life, and read the Scriptures with more care, and not be slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; that I will abound in good discourse, as I have ability and opportunity, with prudence endeavouring, as much as I can, 'to adorn the doctrine of God my Saviour in all things.'

" 3. In particular, I resolve, in the strength, spirit, and grace of Jesus Christ my Lord, to consider well, and perform my ordination-vows, to hold fast the form of sound words which I have received in the 'faith and love which is in Christ Jesus;' and never to let go any truth, whatever it cost me, ever owning the Scripture as the only rule of faith and practice.

" That I will wholly give up myself to the work, and employ all my talents in the service of God and souls, with seriousness and sedulity; that I will not only preach, but to the utmost of my power defend, the truths of God against all opposers, and do all I can to convince or silence gainstayers.

" That I will endeavour to maintain not only truth, but peace and unity in the church of God; that I will patiently bear and thankfully accept of the admonitions of my brethren, and esteem such smitings as an excellent oil that shall not break my head.

" That if ever God shall call me to the charge of a family, I will walk before my house in a perfect way, with an upright heart, not doubting but that then God will come unto me; my house shall be a Bethel; wherever I have a tent, God shall have an altar; and Joshua's resolution shall be mine, 'Whatever others do, I and my house will serve the Lord.'

" That if ever God calls me to the charge of a flock, I resolve by his grace, with all possible diligence, to lay out myself for the spiritual good of those over whom God shall set me; and that in conversation I will endeavour to be an example to the flock, going before them in the way to heaven, and will improve all the interest I have, and all the authority

I may have, for the honour of God, the good of souls, and the edifying the mystical body of Christ.

“ Whatever opposition I may meet with in my work, by the grace of God I will not be terrified with it, nor frightened by the winds and clouds from sowing and reaping, but, in the strength of my God, go on in the midst of discouragements; and if God shall call me to sufferings, which I promise to expect and count upon, I will, by the grace of God, suffer cheerfully and courageously for the truths and ways of Christ, ‘ chusing rather (with Moses) to suffer afflictions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season;’ and I will esteem not only the crown of Christ, but the reproaches of Christ, greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, having respect to the recompence of reward.

“ This is the substance of what I promise in the strength of the Spirit, in the grace of Christ; and having sworn by his strength, I will perform it, that I will keep his righteous judgments; and the Lord keep it always in the imagination of the thoughts of my heart, and establish my way before him.”

Behold the strict and severe scrutiny that Mr. Henry made into the state of his own soul, before he would take upon him the office of the ministry. I have willingly transcribed it all, though somewhat large, because I think it worthy of all observation; it may be useful to convince and reprove those that have rushed into the battle without such solemn preparation, and to guide those that are putting on the harness.

It shews the high thoughts Mr. Henry had of the ministerial office, and the humble thoughts he had of himself; with what care and caution, yea, what fear and trembling, he addressed himself to the work; how strictly he examined his state towards God; how greatly he humbled himself for sin; and yet he was never stained with the common vanities and follies of youth; but his heart-sins were more humbling to him, and more lamented by him, than gross wickedness is by many others.

You will doubtless be pleased to see how impartially he judges himself, and tries the principles and ends by which his soul was governed in undertaking the great work, and how comfortable a testimony his good conscience gave in for him, and with what holy resolutions, not presuming on his own strength, but relying upon divine grace, he entered upon his

work, and what excellent rules he laid down to himself in the discharge of it.

If to begin well is the largest as well as first step in every affair, we need not wonder that Mr. Matthew Henry so much excelled in his ministerial conduct; nothing less could be expected from such an entrance upon it. It is worth the while to compare his prayers, his purposes, and all his preparatory endeavours, with his after behaviour, management, and success; how happy an agreement was there between them! His prayers were heard; the purposes of his heart were established; his humble appeals to God, as to his principles and ends, were all ratified by Heaven; the sincerity of his soul made manifest; by the whole of his future life, God testified that he was upright. God gave him very uncommon assistance in his work, and very uncommon success; and though he sought not wealth and honour, but, like Solomon, chiefly insisted upon religious wisdom, "God gave him that which he first sought," and added to it acceptance and esteem wherever he came, "and withheld no good thing from him."

There was yet another thing relating to his ordination, which Mr. Henry was willing to allow its due consideration, and that is the way and method which is commonly used by the Nonconformists in that duty.

It seems it had been suggested to him by a very worthy person with whom he had consulted about that affair, that possibly he might obtain Episcopal ordination, without taking those oaths and making those declarations which the Dissenters have been used to object against.

What grounds there were at this time to expect that such condescensions would have been made to scrupulous consciences, I cannot tell, nor what bishops they were that would have been so favourable. Bishop Wilkins, I have heard, had drawn some into the church by making such abatements, but he was dead long before this; and whether any that now filled the sees had the same latitude, is more than I know. I was myself ordained the same year; and though I was very kindly and pressing invited to Conformity by the present learned and pious dean of Chester, and treated by him with all the candour and civility of a Christian, a gentleman, and a divine, yet he never gave the least intimation of any abatements that I might expect in the terms of Conformity, but always proceeded in his discourse with me upon the lawfulness of the terms by law required.

It is true, at this time a storm was manifestly gathering over the church of God in England, and it threatened to fall more immediately upon the Episcopal churches, notwithstanding they were established by law.

King James had now issued out a declaration for liberty of conscience; the bishops were commanded to recommend, and order it to be read by the clergy of their respective dioceses: this they refused to do, and gave their reasons in a petition to the king. For this petition, which the government called a libel, they were prosecuted and sent to the Tower, but honourably acquitted upon their trial.

In that petition they declared themselves willing to come into a due temper towards Protestant Dissenters. And whether at that time Mr. Henry might have intimation from those persons of distinction with whom he conversed, that he might possibly be indulged in the points he scrupled, and have Episcopal ordination without them, I cannot tell.

However that was, I find he seriously considered the case, and states it in the following question.

“ Quest. Whether it be adviseable for one that hath devoted himself to the service of God in the work of the ministry, but is by no means satisfied with the terms of Conformity, to chuse ordination by Episcopal hands, (if it may be had without any oaths or subscriptions, according to the form prescribed) rather than ordination by Presbyters, as some time practised among those of that persuasion?”

On this case Mr. Henry thus reasons:

“ The doubt is not, whether Episcopal ordination be lawful, especially considering that the bishop may be looked upon therein as a presbyter, in conjunction with his co-presbyters, and the validity of such ordination is sufficiently vindicated by the Presbyterians in their *Jus Divinum*, but whether it be adviseable or no?

“ 1. There is much to be said, on one hand, to prove it adviseable; as,

“ (1) That Episcopal ordination is established by the settled law of the land, and all other ordinations called and made void by the same law.

“ (2) That the Presbyterians do allow Episcopal ordination to be valid, and have never urged any re-ordination in that case; but the Episcopal party generally deny ordination by presbyters without a consecrated bishop to be valid, and require re-ordination. And,

" (3) That the time may come, when the act of uniformity being abolished, and the unscriptural terms taken away, Episcopal ordination may qualify a man for public service in the church of Christ, when Presbyterian ordination will not qualify him, but altogether incapacitate him, rendering him unfit for public service, without at least a tacit renunciation of former ordination, which will not easily go down with a tender conscience.

" 2. That which may be said against it, as not adviseable, *rebus sic stantibus*, is this :

" (1) It a tacit owning of the prelatical power of ordination, which the bishops usurp and claim as the sacred prerogative of their mitres, and will by no means allow to every gospel presbyter ? and doth not our submission thereunto implicitly justify that usurpation ?

" (2) The pretended fasts, and too formal prayers, with which the bishops manage that solemn service, render it less comfortable to a serious honest heart, that knows the weight of that work upon which ordination is an entrance.

" 3. The making of two distinct orders of deacons and priests is certainly owned by submitting to two distinct ordinations. A scripture-deacon seems to be ordained to serve tables, and not to give himself to the word and prayer ; and it is very hard for one that is self-devoted to the ministry, to say that he thinks himself moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon him the office of a deacon. May this be got over by saying that *diakonos* is a gospel-minister, and one ordained to be so is a minister to all intents and purposes, without faith or ordination ? But here are two things that stumble us.

" (1) The ordainer intends it not so, as appears by the form of ordination.

" (2) The bishops ordain the deacons without any presbyters joining with them, which methinks is unscriptural.

" 4. Ordination by presbyters is more regular and conformable to scripture, and more becoming one that disowns a prelatical power.

" And though an *Episcopus præses* be willingly owned as conveniently necessary, especially in ordination, yet it is a quere whether one professedly claiming to be *Episcopus princeps*, and acting as such, challenging the sole power of ordination *jure divino*, only in the ordination of priests calling in the assistance of com-presbyters, who herein stand but for cyphers, only to grace the solemnity ; I say, whether such an

one can be conscientiously owned as a spiritual father, and an ordainer in Christ's name, by one that knows no such principality established by Christ, the King of his church.

" And perhaps the three things which were urged before for it, may be thus answered.

" To the 1st, That Episcopal ordination is established by the law of the land, a knowing Christian will soon answer, That sufficeth not to make it alone valid, and to invalidate all others, especially considering the practice of the best reformed churches; and that though the church is in the world, yet it is not of the world.

" Besides, the same law that established Episcopal ordination, established the disliked oaths and subscriptions as the terms of it; and if those be disowned, notwithstanding that authority, why must the other be owned and submitted to for the sake of that authority? And by the imposed terms a just measure may be taken of the imposing power.

" To the 2d, That Presbyterians allow Episcopal ordination, but the Episcopal party disown the validity of the Presbyterian ordination, there is a reply ready, That this argument is of no more weight in this case than that of the Papists in a much greater; that the Protestants grant a possibility of salvation in their churches, but the Papists deny it in the Protestant churches; the more uncharitable, unchristian, and antichristian they. And besides, other men's judgments are not the rule of my practice; but let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind, and prove his own work, so shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

" To the 3d, That Episcopal ordination may open a door of opportunity, when Presbyterian ordination may shut and bolt it, (which has most strength in it to direct in point of prudence?) this may be said, that duty is ours, events are God's. It is easy to say, this may be, and it is as easy to say, twenty other things may be; but future events are hid from us, and 'we know not what a day may bring forth;' many unexpected changes have been seen in a short time.

" Who knows but the day may come when God will vindicate the honour of Presbyterian ordination, and when that such a submission to Episcopal ordination (by one in other things otherwise minded, and when that which is purer and better might be had) may be branded with the name of cowardice, and called mean, if not sinful compliance?

" And if we must look forward, supposing the worst should come to the worst, it is but being silenced with good company; and I am apt to think a man might comfortably suffer for these two truths, though in all probability they will never stand alone to be suffered for :

" 1. That ordination by Presbyters is (though not the only valid) yet the best, most scripturally regular, and therefore the most eligible ordination.

" 2. That Jesus Christ never meant to make any of his ministers really priests, *sacerdotes*, otherwise than spiritual priests, as all believers are; nor that he ever meant to necessitate all his ministers to be deacons, that is, but overseers of the poor, or at best but half ministers at the first.

" It may also be considered how far the integrity and uprightness of the heart in acting herein, according to light bestowed after serious consideration and prayer, may administer matter of comfort and satisfaction in a day of suffering, the sharpest of which surely is a day of silencing; and if that should be the issue of it, Abimelech's plea might be renewed, ' Surely in the innocency of my heart I did this; ' and it may be remembered, that when Paul was called to preach the gospel immediately, ' he consulted not with flesh and blood.'

" Mine eyes are ever towards the Lord; shew me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of my observers."

April 28. 1687.

These were the reasons that determined Mr. Henry to seek for ordination in the more despised way of the Presbyterians; and accordingly, having applied himself to those ministers in London to whom he was best known, and some of them being very aged, and very cautious, it was agreed to have all managed with great privacy, and on the 9th May the same year they met on this solemn occasion. The ordainers as well as the ordained are all dead, and therefore you cannot expect so particular an account of the work of that day, only this is certain, it was a good day to the church of God, and a good service that was done that day to the souls of many. God had formed and fashioned Mr. Henry before that day for temple service, as a chosen vessel fit for his Master's use; that day God sealed him, and sent him forth to that service; and

though (as we find it now to our sorrow) he was but an earthen vessel, yet a rich treasure was conveyed by him to the souls of men, and the excellency of the power was of God, and not of man.

Though the privacy of his ordination may have concealed many things from us that would have been well worth our knowledge, we have under his own hand

His Confession of Faith.

“ I believe that there is a God, an incomprehensible perfect Being, a Spirit, infinite, eternal, unchangeable in his Being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, and truth, having his being of himself, and giving being to all things.

“ I believe that the living and true God is but One;

“ And that in the unity of the Godhead there is a Trinity of Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that these Three are but One God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory. This is the revealed mystery which I do believe, but cannot comprehend.

“ 2. I believe that this God, who was God from eternity, did, in the beginning of time, create, or make out of nothing the world, the heaven, and earth, and all things visible and invisible; and this he did by the word of his eternal power, in the space of six days, and all very good.

“ And that the same God doth, by the same power, uphold and maintain the creatures in that being which he at first gave them, by the constant concurrence of Providence; for by him all things subsist, from the highest angel to the meanest worm.

“ And that this God, in the right of creation and preservation, is the supreme absolute Sovereign and Rector of the world, ruling and governing all his creatures, and all their actions, according to the wise, holy, and eternal counsel of his own will, to the praise and glory of his own name.

“ 3. I believe that God, as the Governor of the world, hath given a law to his rational creatures, according to which they are to walk, in order to their glorifying and enjoying him.

“ And that to the present sons of men the Scriptures of

the Old and New Testaments are given, as the only rule to direct them both in faith and practice.

“ That this book of Scripture was given by inspiration of God, holy men speaking and writing as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

“ And that this is the foundation of all revealed religion, and a perfect sufficient rule of direction to the children of men.

“ 4. I believe that God made man upright, in his own image, consisting in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the inferior creatures.

“ And that he made a covenant of works with him, promising life, upon condition of a perfect and perpetual obedience, threatening death upon disobedience ; and giving him a command of trial, Not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon pain of death.

“ 5. I believe that man, being left to the freedom of his own will, at the instigation of the devil, sinned against God, in eating the forbidden fruit, and so fell from his estate of holiness and happiness ; and he being a common person, all his posterity fell with him into an estate of sin and misery.

“ That all the sons of men are born children of disobedience, wanting original righteousness, and under a corruption of the whole nature, slaves to the flesh, the world, and the devil :

“ And consequently children of wrath, obnoxious to the justice of God, and the condemnation of the law :

“ And that no creature is able to deliver them out of this condition.

“ 6. That God having from all eternity, of his mere good pleasure, elected a remnant of mankind to everlasting life, did, in infinite wisdom, find out a way to save and deliver them out of this sinful and miserable estate, and to bring them into a state of salvation ; and that was by giving his only begotten Son to be their Redeemer, who being God, and one with the Father, according to the determinate counsel of God, did, in the fulness of time, take upon him our nature, a true body, and a reasonable soul, and became man, being conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, and called JESUS.

“ I believe that this Jesus was the true Messiah, promised to, and expected by the patriarchs under the Old Testament :

“ That he lived a holy and sinless life, and fulfilled all righteousness, being made under the law; that he underwent the miseries of this life, the wrath of God for our sins, and as a sacrifice for sin died a cursed death upon the cross, thereby satisfying divine justice for the sins of man, and so reconciling us to God, and bringing in an everlasting righteousness.

“ That he was buried, and that, having conquered death, he rose again the third day; and having commissioned his apostles and ministers to preach the gospel to all the world, he ascended into heaven, where he is, and continues to be, God and man, our prevailing Intercessor with the Father, and the glorified Head over all things to the church; in all this gloriously executing the three great offices of prophet, priest, and king.

“ 7. I believe, that in Jesus Christ there is a new covenant of grace made and published in the gospel, the tenor of which is, That all those who, in the sight and sense of their lost and undone condition by nature, come to Jesus Christ, and truly repent of all their sins, and heartily renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh, and all their own righteousness in point of justification, and by a lively faith cordially resign themselves to Jesus Christ as their Prince and Saviour, covenanting to be his humble servants, and serving him accordingly (sincerely, though not perfectly) in all manner of gospel-obedience, shall have all their sins pardoned, their peace made, their persons justified, their natures sanctified, and their souls and bodies eternally saved.

“ 8. I believe, that the Holy Spirit doth effectually apply the redemption purchased by Christ to all the elect, by working in them that which is required of them, convincing them of sin, enlightening their minds with the knowledge of Christ, renewing their wills, and not only persuading them, but powerfully enabling them to embrace Jesus Christ, as he is freely offered in the gospel.

“ And that the same Spirit continues to dwell in them, and to work all their works in them, weakening their corruptions, strengthening their graces, guiding their way, comforting their souls, witnessing their adoption, enabling them more and more to die unto sin, and to live unto righteousness, and keeping them faithful and steadfast unto the end.

“ 9. I believe, that all true believers make up one invisible, sanctified church, which is the mystical body of Jesus

Christ, receiving vital influence from him as from their Head, and having communion in the same Spirit of faith and love.

“ And that all those who by baptism outwardly profess faith in Christ, as the true Messiah, make up the universal visible church of Christ on earth, of which Jesus Christ is the only ruling head, and as such hath instituted ordinances for worship and discipline, which are to be observed and kept pure in particular churches, and hath appointed the standing office of a gospel-ministry, for the due administration of those ordinances, to the edification of the church, and hath promised to be with them always to the end of the world.

“ 10. I believe that God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, who will raise the bodies of all men from the grave, and judge them all according to their works, sending the wicked, impenitent, and unbeliever into everlasting punishment, and receiving the righteous into life eternal, to be together for ever with the Lord.

“ And that then he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all to eternity.”

As the caution of those reverend ministers that were Mr. Henry's ordainers determined them to have it done with great privacy, so for the same reason they did not think fit to give him a certificate in the usual form, but only signed this brief testimonial :

“ We whose names are subscribed are well assured that Mr. Matthew Henry is an ordained minister of the gospel.

Sic testor	W. Wickens,	Nath. Vincent,
	Fran. Tallents,	James Owen,
May 9.	Edw. Lawrence,	Rich. Steele.”

1687.

Mr. Henry accepted for the present such a certificate as they thought fit to give him ; but afterwards, when their fears were pretty well blown over, he was desirous to have one more plain and full ; and accordingly, on the 17th of December 1702, the Rev. Mr. Tallents drew up the following paper, signed by himself and Mr. James Owen.

“ We whose names are subscribed, being two of those six who subscribed a certificate concerning the ordination of Mr. Matthew Henry, May 9. 1687, do hereby certify, that the said certificate was drawn up so short and general, because of the difficulty of the times ; but the true intent and meaning of it was, that the said Mr. Matthew Henry, after due exa-

ordination and exercises performed with their approbation, did, upon the said 9th of May 1687, at London, make a full confession of his faith, and solemn dedication of himself to the service of Christ in the work of the ministry; and was thereupon, by imposition of hands, with fasting and prayer, ordained and set apart to the work and office of a gospel-minister, by those whose names are subscribed with their own hands to the said certificate.

Dec. 17. 1702.

Fran. Tallents,
James Owen.

By the date of this last certificate, it appears that Mr. Henry had been for many years a minister before it was drawn up: but such was his care to have it made manifest to all, that he had not been guilty of an irregular intrusion into the sacred office, that he was glad to procure this more distinct and full account of his manner of entrance into it. By this time he had many seals of his ministry, and an universal acceptance and esteem, and might, without vanity, have used the words of St. Paul, 2 Cor. iii. 1. "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men; forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." But notwithstanding this great seal of Heaven, he despised not the witness of Christ's faithful ministers.

It is somewhat remarkable, that the Rev. Mr. Steele should be concerned in the ordination of both Mr. Henrys, father and son. In the life of Mr. Philip Henry you will find, that in the year 1657, Sept. 16. Mr. Steele was one of those that ordained him at Prees in Shropshire; and now, almost thirty years after, he is concerned in the ordination of his son. This circumstance must be very pleasing both to father and son, and it could not be less pleasing to Mr. Steele himself, (that faithful and excellent preacher) that he should be employed under Christ in sending out two such ministers into the vineyard, such a father and such a son. It was the honour of his younger days to be appointed, by the classis of ministers, one of those that should lay hands on Mr. Philip Henry; and sure it must be the comfort of his now far ad-

vanced years, that he had the opportunity of doing the same office for the son. It was an instance of the goodness of God, which I doubt not all three rejoiced in at that time.

After this solemnity was perfected, Mr. Matthew Henry made all convenient haste down into the country; he was now well instructed, and had received full powers for the discharge of his ministry, and his heart was bent for it. We have already heard, that the winter before, he had received a very earnest invitation to come and settle at Chester, and he had encouraged them to expect his compliance with them, as soon as his affairs would permit.

And now the providence of God had opened a wide door for him, according to the request he put up to God when he was about to be ordained. The rumour there had been the winter before of an indulgence designed, proved true; and it need not be concealed, that the Dissenters were generally very glad of it. Those in Chester had been not a little harassed of late years, by severe fines and imprisonments, though there was nothing found against them, except in the matters of their God: the prospect of rest and liberty was very pleasant to them.

They were not ignorant, that the design of the court was in favour of Popery, but they considered that "God's thoughts are not as man's thoughts;" they knew the Papists would be indulged, whether Protestant Dissenters accepted the liberty or refused it; they were resolved, for their own parts, to do every thing they ought to do for keeping out Popery, whenever it should be imposed upon the nation; they thought, the preaching of dissenting ministers would more effectually disserve the interests of Popery, than their silence could do. However, they knew a necessity lay upon them, and a dispensation of the gospel was committed unto them; and as they had gone on, as well as they could hitherto, under all the frowns of the government, and even to the loss of their goods and their personal liberty, they thought they were obliged to go on still; and if the king thought fit to interpose, and suffer none to hurt them, they saw no reason to refuse such a favour.

The Dissenters in Chester ceased not to follow Mr. Henry with importunate letters, to come over and help them as soon as possible: and Mr. Anthony Henthorne having occasion to go up to London, brought along with him the wishes of all the people, and their hopes that a wide door would be opened

unto him, and effectual ; though there were many adversaries, they let him know the ice was already broken, and that they had desired his friend Mr. T. to preach to them till he came among them.

Mr. Henthorne had been always forward to promote the gospel in that city where God had cast his lot, and greatly blessed him for many years ; he now opened his doors, and offered to his neighbours the use of his house, which was large and commodious, for the worship of God. He received Mr. T. into his house, and gave him a most kind entertainment, in every thing treating him as if he had been his nearest relation.

To his house the people resorted beyond all expectation. They only met at first between the hours of public worship ; most of them went to hear Dr. Fog and Dr. Hancock, whose ministry they valued and blessed God for : but at noon, and again in the evening, they flocked to Mr. Henthorne's ; and the word of God was unto them line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little. Their numbers increased every day, and some time before Mr. Henry came, they found it necessary to provide a larger place. Here again Mr. Henthorne was ready to supply them. A pretty large out-building, part of the friary which belonged to him, was pitched upon to be the place. They set to work on Monday morning, and before the week's end, they had it in that forwardness that the next Lord's day it was opened.

It will easily be believed, this might raise the spleen of some men, and the scorn and contempt of others ; but they went on, and God was graciously pleased to countenance and encourage them, by giving remarkable success to the word ; many young persons were convinced of sin, some we hope were converted. The minister that was upon the spot fell under a very threatening illness, which he and others took to be a consumption ; and yet he was but taken off his work for one day in several months, and then his absence was abundantly supplied by that excellent minister, Mr. James Owen, whose praise is in all the churches. It pleased God to restore the other to a good measure of health ; and having obtained favour of the Lord, he continues this day, and has often placed that affliction among the choicest of his mercies, but sees cause to lament the loss of those excellent men that were the friends and companions of his younger years ; they now rest from their labour, and their works follow them. When

Mr. Henry came down, the other gladly resigned up the work to him: he found every thing ready for him, and the resentments of those that were otherwise minded pretty well allayed, and ever retained a sincere respect for that minister that had served in his absence.

CHAP. III.

His Settlement at Chester, and the agreeable Society he met with there; his Marriage, first and second; his Children; the excellent Order and Government of his Family; some of the most remarkable Providences relating to his Family; his exemplary relative Religion.

MR. Matthew Henry could not be more earnestly expected at Chester, than he was now willing to be with them: accordingly, towards the latter end of May 1687, the same month on which he was ordained, he took his leave of London, and made but a very short stay at Broad Oak; for, on the 1st of June, Mr. Greg, Mr. Coker, Mr. Hall, and some others, came to meet him at his father's house, and attended him to Chester. The day following, being Thursday, was sometime before chosen to be the lecture-day; then he preached his first sermon publicly, from 1 Cor. ii. 2. "I determined to know nothing among you, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified." I am a witness of the joy and thankfulness with which they received him; it may be truly said they received him as an angel of God: and so indeed he was, a messenger sent from God to them. He came to them in the fulness of the blessing of Christ, a great blessing to many souls in Chester, and the country round about.

He found in that city a very agreeable society, which enabled him to go on in his work with greater cheerfulness and courage; he found among them an aged minister, Mr. Harvey, a good scholar and judicious preacher. He would not promise to settle at Chester, till Mr. Harvey had declared his consent to it, which he did not only to the people, but to Mr. Henry himself. One of the first visits that Mr. Henry made, was to Mr. Harvey, and it was before he preached his first lecture-sermon, which has been mentioned; he desired

Mr. Harvey to be free with him, whether he was consenting to his coming, assuring him, if he was not, he would return to the place from whence he came. Mr. Harvey told him he had consented to it, believing there was work enough in Chester for them both.

Mr. Harvey preached a lecture on Tuesdays, on which Mr. Henry constantly attended; he always carried it towards Mr. Harvey as a son to a father, carefully avoiding every thing that might give any occasion of offence, and always advised his friends to shew all possible regard to him, as to a faithful minister of Christ, that had for many years served among them in the gospel, and had been a sufferer for it.

That city was then very happy in several worthy gentlemen that had their habitations there; they were not altogether strangers to Mr. Henry before he came to live among them, but now they came to be his very intimate acquaintance. Some of these, as Alderman Mainwaring and Mr. Vanbrugh, father to Sir John Vanbrugh, were in communion with the church of England, but they heard Mr. Henry on the week-day lectures, and always treated him with great and sincere respect.

Others there were that had all along professed themselves Dissenters, though with great moderation and just esteem to the good men that were of the established church. The chief of these were George Booth, Esq; an eminent lawyer, and near relation to the Earl of Warrington; Richard Kenrich, Esq; a gentleman of very good sense, pleasant and instructive conversation, and truly religious, happy in his yoke-fellow and children, a true lover of Mr. Henry's ministry, which God made very useful to him, (and many branches of that worthy family bless God for him, and I believe will do so to eternity); John Hunt, Esq; younger brother to Mr. Hunt of Boreatton, walking in the same spirit and way with that honoured family from which he was descended, and always Mr. Henry's faithful and prudent friend. But there was not any one in whom Mr. Henry promised himself more comfort than Edward Greg, Esq; a most exemplary person for meekness, humility, and serious godliness, one that had a good report of all men. He had been very instrumental in Mr. Henry's coming to Chester, and was his "Fides Achaes," as he called him; but after two years spent between them in the most intimate and endearing friendship, God took

him away to a better world. Mr. Philip Henry, in his diary, takes particular notice of the death of this good gentleman, of whom he says, "He was a worthy gentleman indeed, he died in the midst of his days, he feared God greatly, was eminently active and useful in settling my son at Chester, and a great encourager of him. The Lord is pulling down our earthen props from under us, that we might lean and trust to himself alone."

Besides these, Mr. Henry met with many kind and valuable friends among the principal tradesmen in Chester. I find their names so often mentioned with great respect in his diary, that I think I ought not to conceal it here, how much comfort and satisfaction he had in the society and conversation of Mr. Anthony Henthorne, Mr. Sam. Kirk, Mr. Tho. Robinson, Mr. John Hulton, and several others. But I must restrain myself; my only design is to let the world see, how fair an opportunity God gave Mr. Henry at his entrance upon his work, both of doing and getting good, and how great encouragement he had cheerfully to go on with it; a wide door and effectual was open; and if there were many adversaries, there were many friends, and those as discreet and faithful as most ministers have been favoured with.

That which still added to the comfort of Mr. Henry's settlement there, was, that in a little time three of his sisters had their lot cast in that city, much to his satisfaction and to their own; since the providence of God had removed them from their father's house, nothing could be more pleasant than to be placed under their brother's ministry.

Mr. Radford and Mr. Hulton (who had married the two younger) were born in Chester, had lived there from their infancy, and were betimes taken notice of for their seriousness and diligence in the concerns of their souls; Dr. Tilston, who married the second sister, removed from Whitchurch to Chester, and fell into very good business and reputation there; but God took him away before he could be said to be in the midst of his days, and yet he was found both ready and willing to die.

The eldest sister alone was separated from them, being married to Mr. Savage of Wrenbury in Cheshire; and yet not so far distant, but that they had the opportunity of frequently meeting both at their own and their father's house, and always with sincere affection, and to mutual comfort. All Mr. Henry's sisters were a comfort and a credit to him, be-

having themselves with that meekness of religious wisdom that gained them universal respect.

But it pleased that God whom he served with his spirit in the gospel of his Son, to be providing for him farther comfort and encouragement. He was now in stated employment, in a very agreeable situation, surrounded with very good friends, the congregation growing, liberty continued, and there was scarcely any thing farther that any one could wish for him, but a suitable yoke-fellow to be the partner of his cares and comforts.

He had heard before he left London, that Mr. John Hardware, who had married a daughter of Mr. Hunt of Boreatton, had an only sister that was very much esteemed for the comeliness of her person, and her excellent qualifications. Her brother's marrying into the Boreatton family, had given her the opportunity of being acquainted with Mr. Philip Henry, and all the family at Broad Oak; she often heard them speak at Boreatton of young Mr. Henry, under a very recommending character; she was pleased in conversing with his sisters, and every thing prepared her to receive a favourable opinion of him.

At his coming to Chester, they soon had an opportunity of seeing each other; and in a little time Mr. Henry told some of his friends what he had in his desires, but he was apprehensive some difficulties might lie in his way. His friends were very much pleased with his design, and readily promised to do him all the service that lay in their power. This proposal was soon made to Mrs. Katharine Hardware's relations; the father and brother very readily and generously gave into it, but the mother, though inferior to none of them in wisdom, could not so readily approve of it.

She considered she was their only daughter; they were able to give her a good portion; she had every thing in her that was recommending; several gentlemen of much larger estates had desired to make their addresses to her; she was afraid the world would say they had not taken sufficient care of their daughter, but rather sacrificed her to the interest of a party. Such scruples as these perplexed the mother's mind. She valued Mr. Henry as much as any one, she valued him as a minister and as a friend, but she thought it was their duty to make better provision for their daughter, as to the world; she knew the ministry, especially of the Nonconformists, was very much despised, the liberty was precarious; if persecuti-

should arise, she questioned whether her daughter would have faith and patience enough to encounter with it, having been tenderly brought up, and every where treated with respect and honour; and if she could not stoop to the cross, she considered it would be a great addition to Mr. Henry's troubles, in a time when he would have most need of comfort.

I speak not these things by conjecture, they were the objections which I heard her make to this proposal, and which I and some others endeavoured to answer as well as we could. After some time her thoughts took a turn more favourable to Mr. Henry's design; his friends were importunate, the father and brother well satisfied, he himself acted in it with all discretion and decency. The daughter did not dissemble the respect she had for him, as a wife and good man, and of an excellent temper; she loved religion and the ministry. These things facilitated the affair; her mother consented to it, and her father gave her to Mr. Henry in marriage, and in her gave him a very great blessing, though it was not of long continuance.

Mr. Henry's good father and mother were greatly pleased with their son's choice, and the change of his condition. When these two families came together, it was soon remembered, that there had been once a motion made between Mr. Hardware the father and Mrs. Henry, then Mrs. Katherine Matthews, Mr. Matthew Henry's mother; and they could not but observe, that though the providence of God did not permit that proposal to take effect, but chose very well for both of them elsewhere, yet that now it should be so ordered that their children should marry together, and their families now be so strictly allied to each other, so many years after an alliance was first intended.

Upon this marriage, Mrs. Henry's father and mother removed from their house at Moldsworth, and came to live at Chester; I think they were the housekeepers, and Mr. Matthew Henry and their daughter boarded with them. Then it was that they had a better opportunity of judging how they had bestowed their daughter; and when they saw so much of Mr. Henry's pious and pleasant conversation, his excellent temper, and great diligence and prudence, they were far from repenting what they had done; so far, that to my certain knowledge, Mrs. Hardware severely reflected upon herself, for opposing it so much as she had done. She was now sensible of the great helps both she and her husband, in

their declining years, had for their souls, by their son Henry's expositions, sermons, and prayers, both in public and in the family. She admired the goodness of God that had chosen such a lot for herself and hers, that had over-ruled her own inclinations, and done so much better for herself and child, than she would have done, had it been left to herself. She said, it was pride and covetousness that were then working in her, though at that time she did not think so. Her own thoughts were now severe upon her, and it was become now a much harder thing to reconcile her to herself, than before it had been to reconcile her to that proposal.

This happy couple had not lived together above a year and a half, before it pleased God to part them. Mrs. Henry was seized in childbed with the small-pox; the child was spared, but the mother taken away. It was on the 14th of February 1689 that God put the faith and patience of Mr. Henry upon this severe trial. I then lived about eighteen miles from him, and had the sad news early sent me, and immediately resolved to go and mourn with him; and a sorrowful family I there found. The mother seemed to me to bear the affliction with the most composed mind. One then present told me, this good gentlewoman was as much as any overwhelmed with grief, when she saw her dear child was dead, but in about half an hour's time she checked herself with these words, "It is the Lord, I have done, I have done, I will not repine," and then endeavoured to comfort others. Then it was that she again reflected upon herself for not consenting more freely to that match, and said, God that knew how long her child was to live, had brought her into that family to prepare her for heaven.

The first word Mr. Henry spoke to me on this occasion, with many tears, was, "I know nothing could support me under such a loss as this, but the good hope I have that she is gone to heaven, and that in a little time I shall follow her thither." See Mr. Philip Henry's Life.

It was no small alleviation of Mr. Henry's grief, that God had spared the child; that while the root was dried up beneath, the branch was not broken off from above. Mr. Philip Henry came to visit his son on this sad occasion, and baptised in public his daughter Katharine. Nothing could be more solemn or affecting than that administration; Mr. Matthew Henry presented his child to baptism, made a confession of his faith, renewed his covenant, and in the most

melting and tender manner added, "Although my house be not now so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; and this is all my salvation and all my desire, although he make me not to grow. And according to the tenor of this covenant, I offer up this my child to the great God, a plant out of a dry ground, desiring it may be implanted into Christ," &c. Every one's heart was full on this occasion, and few dry eyes in that great congregation; they felt his affliction as their own.

This daughter God had still spared, though often in danger of death. She has been for some time married to Mr. Wittur, the son of a religious and wealthy citizen. May the God of their fathers be their God, and the grace and blessings of the covenant their portion and inheritance.

Though this was a very shocking affliction to Mr. Henry, yet God strengthened his heart and his hands, and he went on with his work with his usual diligence and liveliness; his father and mother, Hardware, still continued with him, and shewed the greatest tenderness for him. Now he was more than ever endeared to them, and they lived together with much comfort and cordial affection. After some time, Mrs. Hardware herself put him upon the thoughts of a second marriage, and was desirous that he might make another of her relations happy; the youngest daughter of Robert Warburton, Esq; of Grange was the person their thoughts were set upon. That family was judged by Mr. Henry's friends the most suitable for Mr. Henry to marry into, and that person the most suitable in the family.

The family of Grange was very eminent for religion. Mr. Warburton's father was that learned and religious gentleman, Peter Warburton, Esq; serjeant at law, and one of the judges of the common pleas, a person of eminent wisdom and integrity, who chose for his motto, "Christ is the Christian's All;" which being deeply inscribed in his heart, was put up in almost every room in his house, and ordered to be engraven upon the rings given at his funeral.

He was a younger branch of the ancient and honourable Warburtons of Arely, baronets, who were originally of the name of Dutton; but upon their being possessed of the lordship of Warburton, Arely, and many other fair lordships in Cheshire, took the name of Warburton, and have still

their principal seat at Arely, where they live in plenty and honour.

This religious Judge Warburton, of Helperstone Grange, (for so I find it called) considerably improved both the estate and virtue of the family; and his son (whose daughter Mr. Henry married) built upon that good foundation. He was the third son, but the two eldest died in their infancy; he married Elisabeth, the daughter of Alderman Barkely of the city of London, a very strict and serious Christian. Mr. Warburton was a gentleman that greatly affected retirement and privacy, especially in the latter part of his life. The Bible, and Mr. Baxter's Saint's Everlasting Rest, used to lie daily before him on the table in his parlour. He spent the greatest part of his time in reading and prayer; his house was a little sanctuary to the silenced ministers, and those that adhered to them. The cause of non-conformity he fully approved, and never deserted it to his dying day.

The Rev. Mr. Henry Newcome of Manchester, that prince of preachers, that did truly *dominari in concionibus*, was as much esteemed at Grange as Mr. Philip Henry was at Boreatton. He had his frequent times of coming to them, preaching and administering the Lord's supper in the family; his ministry was very pleasant and profitable to them, indeed it was so to all that knew him. He was brought by the good providence of God, when young, into that part of England, being, as I take it, born in Northamptonshire, where that county borders upon Huntingdonshire. He married into the family of the Mainwarings of Caringham, was first minister of Gosfree, then at Gosworth, from thence he was invited to Manchester, to be an assistant to Mr. Heyrick, a minister of genteel extract and great learning. God made Mr. Newcome one of the greatest blessings to that town, and the country round about, that ever came into it. I never heard of one more successful in conversion-work; his person and behaviour, his sweet temper, admirable sense, and unaffected piety and humility, recommended him every where. The great men courted his acquaintance, and he was a most cordial friend to the meanest Christian. See Dr. Calamy's Abridgement.

The first Lord Delamer was his great friend, and his son, the late Earl of Warrington (that noble patriot) and his lady had a sincere respect for him. But there was no family in Cheshire where he was more heartily welcome and better

pleased than at Grange; they looked on him as their pastor in times of restraint, and he continued his visits to them, and affection for them, to the last, as may be seen by consulting his funeral sermon, preached by Mr. Charlton, with a preface by Mr. How.

I have reason to believe he was consulted in the proposal made by Mr. Henry; for, by the diary of Mr. Philip Henry, I find it recorded, that on the 28th of April 1690 he was with his son at Chester, and there had the satisfaction of meeting with Mr. Newcome of Manchester, by whose company he owns he was very much refreshed; and presently takes notice of his son's motion to Mrs. Mary Warburton, as that which he hoped was of the Lord.

They were married July 8th, the same year, at Grange, Mr. Henry's father and mother being both present, who were greatly pleased at their acquaintance with so worthy a family, and their relation to it. After some days spent, they went to Chester with their son and daughter; and having left them there in comfort, returned to their own habitation at Broad Oak, blessing God that he had thus filled up the former breach, and restored to their son the honour and comfort of that state and relation, which, through the goodness of God, hath proved a real and great blessing to both sides.

His father and mother, Hardware, having, according to their desire, seen him thus settled again, chose to retire to an estate they had at Bromborough Court in Wirral, leaving to him now the care of the family, which they had wholly taken upon themselves before.

Being now the head of a family, he began to keep a diary of all the remarkable passages of Providence that occurred to him. He had not been a negligent observer of divine conduct before this time, but his observations were general, and committed to loose papers; but from this time they were more strictly made, and faithfully recorded; and he continued this practice to the last.

His diary takes date Nov. 9. 1690, on a sabbath-day, which he begins thus: "This day I concluded my subject of redeeming time, from Eph. v. 16." and among other things directed, as very useful, to keep a short account every night how the day has been spent; "this will discover what are the thieves of our time, and will shew us what progress we make in holiness; and now, why should I not make the experiment?"

His diary contains only short hints, except it be on some special occasions. There you may see where he was every day, what visits he received, as well as made; how often he preached, and from what texts. There he records the providences of God towards his family and friends, their mercies and their afflictions, even as if they were his own; any uncommon events; the state of public affairs, with sober and judicious remarks upon them; the books that he read, the journies that he took, the frame of his own spirit, &c.; the whole interspersed with humble reflections and ejaculations.

My business now being to shew his family conduct and relative religion, it will be proper to consider both the constitution of his family, and its order and government.

As for the constitution of it, in the children that God was graciously pleased to give him, the reader will pardon me if I be more particular in the account of them than is usual in narratives of this nature. There is so much of the truth and excellency of religion seen in a becoming temper and conduct towards our relations, and it is a thing in which the present age is so notoriously defective, that I think it very necessary to represent Mr. Henry the more distinctly in this part of his character, by which it will appear, that his relative affections were not only very tender and sincere, but that they were of a holy and spiritual nature, such as became a Christian, and a minister of the gospel.

His first child by his second marriage was born the 12th of April 1691. He observes the more than common danger Mrs. Henry went through; but that earnest prayers were put up to God for her, both in public and private, and God gave a gracious answer. She was delivered of a daughter, on which he observes, "It is not in vain to wait upon God;" and yet adds, "I have been travailing in birth this day for poor souls, and I fear there is not strength to bring forth."

On this occasion his good-father came to Chester to visit his children, and rejoice with him, and on the lecture-day baptised the child Elifabeth, preaching from Isa. xliii. 10. "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen," witnesses without godfathers; and in his diary has made this remark, "That this his grandchild was born on the very day of the month, and time of the day, that his eldest son John died, twenty-four years ago."

Having now a child by his second marriage, Mr. Matthew Henry made his will, upon which he says, "I have now set

my house in order, and, to the best of my apprehensions, have ordered it justly, as becomes my obligations of that kind, and I have now been deliberately weighing the case of a departure from hence; the things that invite my stay here are far from outweighing those that oppress my departure; through grace, I can say, 'I desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better.'

This child lived not above a year and half; the chincough and cutting of teeth threw her into a fever, under which she continued for some time; and not a day passed in which he did not take some notice of her case with great tenderneſs. Three days before she died he writes thus: "The child has had a very ill night, very weak, and to all appearance worse; but I am much comforted from her baptism. I desire to leave her in the arms of him that gave her me; the will of the Lord be done. I have said, if the Lord will spare her to me, I will endeavour to bring her up for him. I am now sitting by a poor weak child, thinking of the mischievous nature of original sin, by which death reigns over poor infants."

This child died July 19. 1692, on which he thus writes: "In the morning I had the child in my arms, endeavouring solemnly to give it up to God, and to bring my heart to God's will; and presently there seemed some reviving; but while I was writing this down, I was suddenly called out of my closet. I went for the doctor, and brought him with me; but as soon as we came in, the sweet babe quietly departed between the mother's arms and mine, without any struggle; for nature was spent by its long illness: and now my house is a house of mourning. It was a pretty forward child, and very apprehensive, and began to go, and talk, and observe things very prettily. I had set mine affection much upon it, I am afraid too much. God is wise, and righteous, and faithful; and even this also is not only consistent with, but flowing from covenant law. It is this day five years since I was first married; God has been teaching me to sing of mercy and of judgment. Lord, make me more perfect at my lesson, and shew me wherefore thou contendest with me: Lord, wean me from this world by it. Blessed be God for the covenant of grace with me and mine, it is well ordered in all things and sure. O that I could learn to comfort others with the same comforts with which, I trust, I am comforted of my God! This goes near, but, O Lord, I submit.

"My wife is much distressed, the Lord sustain her; I would endeavour to comfort her. We are now preparing for a decent interment of my poor babe. Many friends come to see us. I am much refreshed with 2 Kings iv. 26. 'Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with the child? and she said, It is well.' When I part with so dear a child, yet I have no reason to say otherwise, but that it is well with us, and well with the child, for all is well that God doth; he performeth the thing that he appointed for me, and his appointment of this providence is in pursuance of his appointment of me to glory, to make me meet for it."

After the funeral he writes thus: "I have been this day doing a work that I never did, burying a child; a sad day's work: but my good friend Mr. Lawrence preached very seasonably and excellently at the lecture in the afternoon, from Psalm xxxix. 9. 'I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it.' My friends testified their kindness by their presence. Here is now a pretty little garment laid up in the wardrobe of the grave, to be worn again at the resurrection; blessed be God for the hope of this."

The month before this he had set it down in his diary, that he had been at the funeral of a child of his brother Hardware's, of which he says, "He was laid in Trinity church, in the same grave with the precious remains of my dear wife; perhaps this grave may be next opened for me; the Lord make me ready, and grant I may be found so doing." This grave was not opened next for him, but it was opened for his child; and now, twenty-two years after, in the same month, the same grave was indeed opened for him; and according to his desire, when death came, it found him so doing, engaged in his ministerial work.

In his father's diary I find him thus sympathizing with his children upon this afflicting providence. "July 19. died my dear grandchild Elisabeth Henry, of the teeth and chin-cough, the forwardest for her time of all my grandchildren, and most likely to have lived, but death had a commission; a sharp trial to the tender parents, being their only one; God support them under it, and do them good by it, that when they are tried, they may come forth as gold."

I expect now to be censured for giving so large an account of the death of this child: perhaps those that know what it is to part with children will excuse me. My design in it is to set before us all a pattern of godly sorrow, and to let us

see what it is to mourn after a godly sort; what difference there is between affections sanctified and those that are merely natural; and how good a use the grace of God will teach us to make of all the dispensations of providence.

The year after, April 3. 1693, another daughter was born to them; on which Mr. Henry observes, "Thus God doth renew his witnesses; out of the mouth of two living witnesses, a living mother and a living child, shall this word be established, that God is good." It was but a few days after this that his sister Hulton was delivered of a daughter.

These mercies brought their affectionate father over to Chester again; and on the 6th of the same month he publicly baptised his two grandchildren, Katharine Hulton and Mary Henry, for whom, in his own diary, he puts up this ejaculation, "The Lord write their names in the book of the living." On this occasion he preached, after his excellent manner, from Gen. xxxiii. 5. "Esau asked, Who are these with thee? and Jacob said, The children which God hath graciously given thy servant." He observed what a grave and religious, as well as respectful answer Jacob gave to a common question; and insisted chiefly on these two points, "That children are the gift of God, and that the children of the covenant are his gracious gifts."

But this child was soon taken away from them, the same month in which it was born; it died April 22. After Mr. Henry had given some vent to his affectionate sorrows, he concludes, "The Lord is righteous, he takes and gives, and gives and takes again: I desire to submit: but, O Lord, shew me wherefore thou contendest with me."

This affliction he endeavoured, as a minister, to improve to himself and others on the next Lord's day, from Rom. v. 14. "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come." He expounded in the morning the 38th of Job, where God so largely asserts his sovereignty, and challenges all that shall presume to arraign the wisdom and equity of his proceedings; and in the evening he thus records it: "I have now laid my poor babe in the grave in Trinity church, the fourth within this year buried there, two of my brother's children, and two of mine: yet the Lord is gracious; the Lord prepare me for that cold and silent grave."

Thus God was pleased to try his faith and patience; two children brought forth for the grave, when he hoped God was building up his house. Hitherto it was not made to grow, but God will not contend for ever. There were the blessings of a posterity reserved for him, and on the 27th of September 1694, God gave him another daughter, which his father came and baptised Esther, and he mentions her with this request, "The Lord number this child among his hidden ones." Many prayers have been put up for her, many dangers she went through in her childhood, especially in the year 1697. When she was about three years old, her life was almost despaired of; on which occasion her father thus expresses himself: "What work doth original sin make! I desire to give her up to God; but I find it very hard, for she is the delight of my eyes. The Lord pity as a father pities! yea, surely he pities much more. Prayer was heard for her, she has been spared in great mercy."

The year after, June 24. 1697, God gave them another daughter, of whom he writes, "This child is come into a world of tears;" for now God had made a fore breach upon them, and not on them only, but on his church, by removing from them his excellent father. He observes on this occasion, that four afflicting providences, and four merciful providences, happened on four several days of the year, one of each; for, says he, "My brother John died and my daughter Elisabeth was born, April 12; my dear wife died, and my daughter Katherine was born, Feb. 14; my father died, and this child was born, June 24; I first married, and my daughter Elisabeth died, July 19. Thus God has set the one over against the other, that I may sing of mercy and of judgment."

His father being now gone, who used to take great pleasure in visiting his children, and baptising his children's children, he sent to his faithful friend and brother Mr. Lawrence of Nantwich on this occasion, who baptised his daughter Anne, and made a very judicious and practical discourse upon the nature of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper; shewing how the Jewish church in the wilderness enjoyed the substance of them, in "passing under the cloud, and through the sea, eating the manna, and drinking the waters of the rock," 1 Cor. x. 1---3. On this occasion Mr. Henry writes, "I have endeavoured to glorify God this day

by the profession I have made of his name; the Lord accept of me."

But this child was taken from them in less than a year and a half; she died of the measles, her sister Esther had them at the same time; "the one was taken and the other left." The death of this child made a great impression upon the hearts of the parents: the surprise was the greater, as her father observed; because, though many children in the city had that distemper, they had not heard of any that died of it. Hear how he communes with his own heart about this affliction: "My desire is to be sensible of the affliction, and yet patient under it. It is a rod, a smarting rod; God calls my sin to remembrance, the coldness of my love to God, abuse of spiritual comforts; it is a rod in the hand of my Father, I desire in it to see a Father's authority, who may do what he will, and a Father's love, who will do what is best. We resigned the soul of the child to him that gave it; and if the little ones have their angels, doubted not of their ministration in death; we have hopes, through grace, that it is well with the child: little children in heaven we look upon as the *vis laetæa*, the individuals scarce discernible, but altogether beautifying the heavens. We spent the day in sorrow for our affliction, our friends sympathising with us; one day committing the immortal soul to God, this day the body to the dust of the earth as it was. I am in deaths often, Lord teach me how to die daily. I endeavoured, when the child was put into the grave, to act faith upon the doctrine of the resurrection, believing in him who quickeneth the dead."

All this while, he went on with great zeal and unwearied diligence, building up the house of God; and God was pleased to go building up his house. On the 3d of May 1700, God was pleased to give him a son. Such uncommon dangers attended his birth, both to the mother and child, that he has marked it down as no less than a miracle of mercy that their lives were spared. "We wept (says he) and made supplications again and again, and we found it was not in vain. This son was born that very day thirty-nine years, when my father's eldest son John was born, and it was on a Friday too."

He baptised this his son Philip himself; and though some of his friends thought it not so proper, yet he judged it very fit, as it is for the minister to communicate in the Lord's supper, which himself administers. This was done on the lecture

day, May 9. on which day he observes, thirteen years ago he was ordained. He preached on this occasion from 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15. "I will be his father, and he shall be my son; if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my mercy shall not depart from him."

This happy increase of his family put him upon making a new will, which he did on the 20th instant, having begged direction from God about it. This son cost his mother dear; when he was about a month old, he was very ill, and the mother's great weakness and her excessive concern for her son brought her to the very gates of death. She thought herself to be dying, and all about her feared it, but God stepped in between her and death; her son still lives, endeavouring to make his tender mother some recompence for what she suffered for him, and I hope will continue to be the son of comfort and rejoicing to her.

The year after, Oct. 27, 1701, another daughter was added to his family. That morning after the child was born, it fell out for Mr. Henry to read in course the 4th chapter of 1 Samuel; and he took occasion from thence to bless God that their case was not like that of the wife of Phinehas there recorded, whose dying lips called her child Ichabod, because her husband was slain, and the ark of God was taken. On the 6th of November he baptised his daughter Elisabeth in public, preaching, as he says, for his own encouragement, from Mark x. 16. "And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them."

He now called his friends together, to join with him in his own family, in prayer and praise for family mercies, taking notice, that at this time they had the greatest reason for thanksgiving, because, of late, more women had died in child-bed than had been known in Chester for so short a time for many years; and they had but just then heard of the death of their sister, the wife of Dr. Warburton of Abbots Bromley, of the iliac-passion; on which he adds, "Many fall at our side, and many at our right hand; distinguishing mercy calls for distinguished thankfulness and obedience."

His family continued still to grow. Aug. 11, 1703, they had another daughter, in which the mother had experience of the same mercy which is mentioned concerning his own mother, that she was delivered before the midwife came. This child was baptised Sarah, on the 19th of the same month, by

her father, he preaching from Isaiah xlv. 3. "I will pour out my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring;" and he adds in his diary, earnest prayer that God would perform that promise to him and his, and says, "I have given her up to Christ, to be by him presented to the Father; I have endeavoured to give glory to God in it, but I am weak and worthless. God make my child a daughter of Sarah." I suppose she had this name given her in respect to his eldest sister, and may she prove an equal ornament and blessing to the family.

It was about three years after that God gave them another daughter. The father observes, it was on the 14th of February 1708, that day nineteen years that his daughter Katherine was born, and the dear mother died. "Then (says he) I was made to sing of mercy and of judgment, but now only of mercy. I was this morning at work with my exposition upon Ezra iii. about the mixture of joy and sorrow at the building of the second temple; and was taught thereby, that the remembrance of former troubles ought not to drown the thankful sense of present mercies." On the 27th day, the lecture, he baptised his daughter Theodosia, preaching from Psal. cxliv. 12. "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth, and our daughters as corner-stones polished after the similitude of a palace;" adding fervent prayers, that all his might be implanted into Christ, and coming to him as a living stone, might, as lively stones, be built up a spiritual house.

On the 31st of March 1711, God added to them yet another daughter, a shaft that filled up his quiver, who was by him also baptised Mary. He preached on the occasion from 1 Chron. xxix. 14. "Of thine own have we given thee," and in his diary expresses earnest desires that he and all his might be accepted of God.

Thus, for the space of two and twenty years, God was building up Mr. Henry's family; for so long it was betwixt the birth of his eldest and that of his youngest daughter; while in the mean time God remarkably owned and blessed his ministry, and made him a spiritual father to a much more numerous offspring.

If any shall think I have been too large and particular in this account of Mr. Henry's family, I hope they will consider how natural it is for one that is writing the life of his friend, some times to consult his own affections, and not always his

reader's humour. As nothing can be dearer to parents than their children, so nothing ought to be dearer to the friends of the parents, than the children that God has given them. Those that love to think of the parents, cannot be displeased to hear of their children; and I am sure what they have met with here concerning the constitution of the family, will afford them matter of profitable instruction.

Having seen how Mr. Henry's family was constituted, we now proceed to take a view of its order and government: and one may easily suppose a person that had his eye so much upon God in the birth of his children, and prayed so earnestly for them from the first, could not but be very careful to bring them up for God; and he that laboured so abundantly for the souls of others, could never be unconcerned for the souls of those that were to him as his own soul.

He was well acquainted with the Scripture rules of Christian economy, and he had an excellent pattern in his eye; his father's house was regulated with as much wisdom and piety as any that our age has produced. I have known those that, upon their first acquaintance there, were surpris'd to see so much beauty of holiness, and were ready to say, "Surely God is in this place; this is no other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven."

What method his father observed in the government of his family, his son has very distinctly told us, and it was his care all along to tread in his father's steps, and in nothing did he more exactly imitate him than in his family conduct. To this part of religion he had solemnly bound himself by his ordination vows, which have been already mentioned; and he neither forgot his covenant with God, nor dealt falsely in it. As soon as he had a tent, God had an altar there, and he was true to Joshua's resolution and his own, "I and my house will serve the Lord."

His closet-duties being managed between God and his own soul, fall not under human observation, any farther than that all his family knew he was frequent and constant in them. His father had left the strictest charge with all his children, that they should be sure to look to their secret duty, and keep that up, whatever else they did, for their souls could never prosper in the neglect of it; and his heavenly Father taught him to pray, giving him the spirit of adoption betimes, and causing him to taste the sweetness of communion with

God in secret. His private memoirs often record the comfort he had in this hidden part of religion, and how God favoured him with some remarkable returns of prayer.

In the worship of God with his family, he strictly observed his father's example, both in all the parts and circumstances of it.

He called them together early in the morning, as early as the state of the family would permit, and did not use to defer it till late in the evening, being ashamed to put God off with drowfy devotions. He was constant in family-worship; whatever happened, or whoever was present, this duty was never neglected, morning or evening.

He was never tedious in it, but always full and comprehensive, performing much in a little time, and yet far from hurrying it over as a task; he was always careful to discharge this duty, so as that he might therein sanctify the name of God.

He began with a short invocation of the name of God, begging assistance and acceptance; then he read a portion of Scripture in course, out of the Old Testament in the morning, and the New in the evening: he did not tie himself to go through a chapter at once; but, unless it was very short, divided it into several sections, according to the subject matter, which ordinarily consisted of about eight or ten verses, more or less; then he gave a short, but judicious and affectionate exposition; sometimes drawing up the verses read into a plain and proper scheme, in which he was the most happy man in the world. Sometimes he would omit the connection, and only go over the several passages in their order, as the matter directed; he gave the sense, even where it was the most intricate, in a plain and familiar style, which not only made it intelligible, but pleasant and satisfactory to the mind that received it: he omitted not to raise practical notes, proper to quicken the heart to duty, and to direct it in duty.

These his family expositions, some that were with him wrote down after him; all attended to them: and that he might engage them to that attention, as soon as the exposition was over, he required an account of them, what they had observed and remembered; and it was pleasant to behold how diligently the young children would listen, and how prettily and properly they would give an account of what they had heard.

After exposition, some part of a psalm was constantly sung in the morning, as well as the evening; the morning and evening sacrifice, as he used to call it. Every one had a book, and so neither the sense nor the melody suffered that interruption which can scarcely be avoided where it is read line by line.

Prayer succeeded singing, and was performed by him with an almost inimitable liveliness of affection, and tenderness of spirit, with great propriety of petitions to the case of the family, and of every one in it, and of his friends that were so happy as to be present with him at that duty. The state of the nation and of the church of God were never omitted, nor slightly touched upon; all was done without tedious repetition. The whole was often comprehended within the space of half an hour, or a little more; this made the work easy and pleasant. It was no unseasonable hindrance to the necessary business of the family; they returned to the duty with desire, and came from it with delight.

When prayer was ended, his children came to him for his blessing, which he gave them with seriousness and affection, in the name of the great God, who commands the blessing out of Sion, even life for evermore. How many such prayers and blessings are now upon the file for those he has left behind, which we hope will be made sure and effectual to them in their season!

Besides the daily oblations that were made to God in his family, as constantly as the morning and evening succeeded each other, he often kept family fasts, in which sometimes he would call in the assistance of his friends; sometimes he had only his own family with him, and sometimes he would keep them alone. On these occasions he would wrestle with God for spiritual blessings for himself, his family, and his friends; and whatever care, or fear, or trial any of them was under, that was then most solemnly committed to the great God.

His public work on the Lord's day, great as it was, did not trench upon family worship. On that day he rose early; and having been some time alone with God and his own soul, about eight of the clock he called his family together. He omitted not his expositions; he sung an hymn proper to the day, and went through the other parts of worship as usual, and then took his family with him to the solemn assembly. When he returned home at noon, and had dined, he sung a psalm, and put up a short prayer with his family,

and so retired into his closet, till the time of public worship returned. In the evening he generally repeated in his family both the sermons of the day, when many of his neighbours came in; after repetition, sung and prayed, then sung two verses more of a suitable hymn, and so pronounced the blessing, and catechised the younger children. This he used to do before he went to supper. After that was ended, he sung the 136th psalm, then catechised his elder children and servants, and heard them repeat what they could remember of the sermons of the day; and so concluded the day with prayer.

I am sensible many will look upon this as incredible and impracticable, others as superfluous; but he went through all this constantly and comfortably. He had a happy constitution both of body and mind, and used to say, "If God had given more to him, he expected more from him, but would accept of less from those to whom less was given."

His family piety was not confined to the duties of divine worship, (though in those he abounded) but took the whole compass of relative religion. He was one of the most affectionate relations, and one of the most faithful friends in the world. This he made to appear by his constant prayers for them, his frequent visiting them, as he had opportunity, by writing kind and good letters to them on all occasions; and he took particular pleasure in their company. No man entertained his relations and friends with more cordial cheerfulness; his concern for them under their afflictions, his unaffected sorrow for the loss of them, and his readiness to help and serve those they left behind them, if these be allowed to be proofs of relative piety, he has left many instances of it in every relation in which he stood, whether as a son, brother, yoke-fellow, father, or friend.

To his excellent parents he was a truly dutiful and affectionate child. Few children were so happy as Mr. Philip Henry's, in both their parents; and few parents were so happy as they, in every one of their children, and in him especially. By what has been related of him in his younger years, you will easily discern, that he had learned to honour his father and mother betimes, and that from principles of grace as well as natural affection. When he was at London, I could produce many excellent letters which he sent every week to his parents, full of honour and esteem. That absence that tempts thousands of young persons to flight and

forget their parents, made him love them more, and long to be with them again, often declaring, "No place was so good to him as his father's house."

When he had a family of his own, seated by the good providence of God within less than half a day's journey from his father's house, he was pleased with that situation, as it gave him frequent opportunities of visiting his parents, and being visited by them. How often does his diary carry him to Broad Oak? Not a month but we find some of those pleasant journies recorded, and great comfort expressed in finding and leaving his good parents in health and usefulness. To recite passages of this nature would be endless. I observe by his papers, his father and he often contrived to meet at some place between Chester and Broad Oak, and preach and pray together there, sometimes at Shockledge, sometimes at Ridley, sometimes at Peckfarton, where they had week-day lectures; thus making their affectionate visits to each other subservient to purposes spiritual and divine.

But the great trial of his affection and honour for so good a father, was that which he was put upon when death parted them: then indeed he found he had occasion for all the faith and patience that God had given him, and all too little without fresh supplies. The account that he has left behind him of his father's sickness and death, in his printed Narrative, is very affecting, and deserves to be well considered, as a pattern to all of filial piety; but the impressions that sad providence made upon his spirit, will best appear by what he has recorded of them in his diary on that occasion, which you shall have in his own words:

"June 23. 1696. This afternoon, about three o'clock, my father's servant came for the doctor, with the tidings that my dear father was taken suddenly ill. I had then some of my friends about me, and they were chearful with me, but this struck a damp upon all. I had first thought not to have gone till the next day, it being somewhat late, and very wet, and had writ half a letter to my dear mother; but I could not help going, and I am glad I did go, for I have often thought of that, 2 Kings ii. 10. 'If thou see me when I am taken up from thee,' &c. The Doctor and I came to Broad Oak about eight o'clock, and found him in great extremity of pain, nature (through his great and unwearied labours) unable to bear up, and sinking under the load. As soon as he saw me, he said, 'O son, you are welcome to a dying fa-

ther. I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand.' (I omit the rest of his dying words, because they have been already published.) A little after midnight, my mother holding his hands, as he sat in bed, and I holding the pillow to his back, he very quietly, and without any struggling, groan, or rattling, breathed out his dear soul into the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom he had faithfully served.

"And now, what is this that God hath done unto us? The thing itself, and the suddenness of it, are very affecting; but the wormwood and the gall in it is, that it looks like a token of God's displeasure to us that survive. The Lord calls my sin to remembrance this day, that I have not profited by him, while he was with us, as I should have done. Our family-worship this morning was very melancholy; the place was 'Allon Baccuth,' the oak of weeping; the little children were greatly affected, and among the neighbours was heard nothing but lamentation and mourning; my dear mother cast down, but not in despair; I, for my part, am full of confusion, and like a man astonished.

"June 27. The day of my father's funeral; melancholy work! O that by this providence I might contract an habitual gravity, seriousness, and thoughtfulness of death and eternity! Our friends most affectionately sympathise with us, and do him honour at his death. How has this providence made Broad Oak like a wilderness, desolate and solitary, and the poor people as sheep without a shepherd!

"July 1. I returned late to Chelster, and found the children well; the next day I studied, and preached the lecture from 2 Pet. i. 13, 14. 'Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by putting you in remembrance; knowing, that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus hath shewed me.' O that it might be preached to my own heart, and written there, that, in consideration of my being to depart hence shortly, I may double my diligence!

"And now I have time to reflect on this sad providence, what shall I say to these things?

"1. I bless God that I ever had such a father, whose temper was so very happy, and his gifts and graces so very bright; one that recommended religion and the power of godliness, by a chearful and endearing conversation; that had himself, and taught others, the art of obliging. I bless God

that I had him so long; that he was not removed from me when I was a child; that I have not been left to myself, to be a grief and heaviness to him. Nothing made me differ from the worst but the free grace of God; to that grace be the glory of all the benefit that my father was to me, and the comfort I was to him.

“ 2. I have a great deal of reason to be humbled and ashamed that I have profited and improved no more by my relation to so good a man, that I have not so well transcribed that fair copy of humility, meekness, candour, and zealous piety. O that the remembrance of him may have a greater influence upon me than the personal converse had!

“ 3. Death comes nearer and nearer to me, ‘ Lord, make me to know mine end, and teach me to number my days.’ In January last, death came into our classis, and removed good Mr. Kinston of Knutsford. In February, death came into the Friary, (the place where Mr. Henry’s house stood) and took away Mrs. Cook. In March, death came into my house, and carried away my cousin Aldersey; in April, it came into our family, in the death of my father Warburton. At the end of May, I said with thankfulness, Here is a month past in which I have not buried one friend: but June has brought it nearest of all, and speaks very loud to me to get ready to get after. The Lord prepare me for a dying hour, that will come certainly, and may come suddenly, that when it comes, I may have nothing to do but die.

“ 4. The great honour and respect paid to his memory, and the good name he has left behind him, should encourage me to faithfulness and usefulness; the scripture is fulfilled, ‘ Those that honour God he will honour; and before honour is humility.’

“ 5. This should bring me nearer to God, and make me live more upon him who is the fountain of living waters. My dear father was a counsellor to me, but Christ is the Wonderful, Counsellor; he was an intercessor for me, but Christ is an Intercessor that lives for ever, and is therefore able to save to the uttermost. Nor are the prayers that he has put up for me and mine lost, but, I trust, we shall be reaping the fruit of them, now he is gone. I have had much comfort in hearing God speak to me by this scripture, Jer. iii. 4. ‘ Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth?’ My dear father wrote to me lately upon the death of my father Warburton,

‘Your fathers, where are they? one gone and the other going, but you have a good Father in heaven that lives for ever.’ Abba, Father, the Lord teach me to cry so, and to come into the holiest as to my Father’s house, and let these things be written upon my heart. Amen, amen.”

Such were the workings of Mr. Henry’s heart under this great affliction, where one may see the most tender and sincere affections to an earthly parent, regulated and governed by stronger affections of another nature.

The next sacrament after this breach was made, he set himself more closely than ever to improve the providence in that solemn part of divine worship, being desirous (as himself has expressed it) to bring the ordinance home to the providence, and to have a particular reference to it, in that covenant he was now to renew with God at his table. And thus he writes :

“ 1. I would, in this ordinance of the Lord’s supper, very particularly eye God as a Father, as my Father. My father that’s gone was to me a faithful reprovcr, teacher, and counsellor ; I desire therefore at this time more than ever to take the Spirit of God to be my reprovcr, teacher, and counsellor. I was often refreshed in visiting my father, and conversing with him : I would, by the grace of God, have more fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, whom I may be free with.

“ 2. There are some things I would more particularly engage myself to upon this providence ; the Lord direct, confirm, and ratify good resolutions. I will now labour and endeavour in the strength of the grace of Christ, and the Lord give me a sufficiency of his grace.

“ 1. To be more grave and serious ; partly as the fruit of this sad and solemn providence, which should not only affect me for the present, but alter me for the future, and make me habitually more serious ; partly because, my father being now removed, I have almost lost the epithet of a young man, which uses to pass for some excuse ; it is time to lay aside vanity.

“ 2. To be more meek and humble, courteous and candid ; because these were the graces that my dear father was eminent for, and God owned him in them, and men honoured him for them. I am sensible of too much hastiness of spirit, I would learn to be of a cool mild spirit.

“ 3. To be more diligent and industrious in improving my time, for I see it is hastening off apace, and I desire to have

it filled up, because I must shortly put off this my tabernacle; and there is no working in the grave."

When the work of that day was over, he makes this remark: "I have been full of distractions, which have much discouraged me; yet I have had some communion with God in this day's work beyond what I expected, though not what I earnestly desired. I have solemnly renewed my covenants with the Lord at his table, and particularly those above written; the Lord give me his grace, that having made these vows, I may make them good."

Not many days after this, he has these words: "I was much affected to read in my dear father's diary, such expressions of great humility and self-abasement. While my dear and honoured father lived, together with my honoured friends and fathers, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Steel, Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Newcome, I looked upon myself but as one of the rising generation, that had got the prime of my life before me; but now I begin to think myself in the zenith, and therefore upon the point of turning downwards. And how little have I done for God? If I were now to make up my account, would it not come short even of that of the unprofitable servant, 'Lord, here thou hast that is thine;' but the blood of Christ balanceth the account, and I trust to that, and in that I make my refuge. I have now, and have had for a good while, a great degree of health and strength, but that is no bond of security for long life. Lord, give me grace to work out my own salvation, and next to that, with faithfulness to do the work of my place."

Thus Mr. Henry lamented his father's death, and endeavoured to improve it to his spiritual advantage. Nor did he discover a less dutiful and pious affection to his good mother; he had a just sense of his happiness in her, and of his duty to her, and when she was brought into the disconsolate state of widowhood, he was more than ever fond of her, and did all he could to comfort her. His visits to her were frequent, his letters more frequent; he was desirous to have her as much with him as might be, and was greatly pleased when they could enjoy her company with them at Chester.

But he was far from grudging her the comfort and usefulness in which she lived upon her own estate at Broad Oak; he was pleased to see how much good she did, and how much respect she had among her neighbours. The honour he had for so good a mother, I cannot give you a better account of

than in his own words, in the last edition of his father's life. "It pleased God (says he) graciously to prolong the life of my dear and honoured mother, almost eleven years after my father, very much to the comfort of all her relations. She continued to the last at her house at Broad Oak, where she was born, a great example of wisdom, piety, and usefulness, and abounding in good works; I think I may say, in her sphere and capacity, she was not inferior to what my father was in his. She was very happy in a constant calmness and serenity of mind, not easily to be disturbed; which, as it was a singular gift of the divine grace, and an instance of her wisdom, so it contributed much to her close and comfortable walking with God, and her doing good."

In the year 1707, God deprived Mr. Henry of this parent also; she was far advanced in years, and had for many months found herself much declining, which she observed with great patience, and the cheerful expectation of her change. Her son had been with her for some days before her death, but was obliged, at the end of the week, to return to his family and work at Chester, leaving his sisters with her. She gave him her blessing, and on the Lord's day morning, May 25. he received the account of her death, which happened a few minutes after twelve. Just at the entrance upon the sabbath, she entered upon her everlasting sabbath, as two of her sons-in-law, Dr. Tylston and Mr. Radford, had done before. Mr. Henry was necessitated to go through his sabbath-work with this heavy burden upon his spirit; observing, that Christ would not suffer him whom he had called to preach the gospel, "first to go home, and bury his father." In the evening of the Lord's day, he went to the beheaded family, where they wept and prayed together; and on the 28th day they laid her remains in the silent dust, close by their father's; "which (says he) I desire to do in the actual belief and expectation of the resurrection of the dead, and of the commandment given concerning their bones."

On the 4th of June he preached her funeral-sermon at Broad Oak from Prov. xxxi. 28. "Her children shall rise up, and call her blessed." I refer to the sermon itself, which is printed with his father's life, and is a just memorial of her great worth, and her children's affection and esteem for her.

About this time he observes in his diary, "That with the rents and profits of the current year, there would be little more to do than to discharge her funeral, and pay legacies.

She left no debts to pay; she lived with comfort, bore her testimony to the goodness of God's providence, which she had experienced all her days; did not increase what she had; nor coveted to lay up, but did good with it, and left a blessing behind her."

In his reflections upon that year, he writes thus: "As to the year past, I have as much reason as ever to lament my barrenness and unfruitfulness, that I have not made better progress in knowledge and grace. I find myself growing into years, being now turned of forty-five; I begin to feel my journey in my bones, and desire to be thereby loosened from the world and from the body. The death of my dear and honoured mother this year, hath been a sore breach upon my comforts; for she was my skilful, faithful counsellor, and it is an intimation to me, that now, in order of nature, I must go next. My estate is something increased, the Lord enlarge my heart to do good with it; but as goods are increased, they are increased that eat them; my children are growing up, and that minds me that I am going down."

He was not so wholly wrapped up in his affection to his own parents, as to neglect those whose son he was, by marrying into their families: as he had twice married into families of distinction, not only for the world, but for religion, he always paid them the duty of sincere reverence and honour. As for the family of Bromborough, to which he was first related, he had a very hearty regard to them, and concern for them, and all theirs. If any of them was sick, he did not fail to visit them, he made their cares and comforts his own; when matters were well, he rejoiced with them, and when otherwise, he was a hearty mourner.

He had a great regard for his mother Hardware, and always shewed it in his behaviour towards her, both when they lived together at Chester, and afterwards at their house at Wirral, where she lived several years, walking with God, and looking well to the ways of her household, and growing in grace, and a meetness for heaven.

It was in the latter end of the year 1693 that she was suddenly taken ill; they presently sent Mr. Henry notice of it, who went immediately to see her, and found she was struck with an apoplectic fit. The next day she was more sensible, and cried out, "Prayer, prayer." He observes, "How she that used to be so quick and lively in every thing, should not be hardly able to speak to be understood; how great a

change, and how well not to have the great work to do at such a time!"

On the 6th of December that year she died; Mr. Henry truly says of her, she was a person eminent for wisdom and grace. She was buried at Tarvin the 9th of December, and the day after, Mr. Henry preached from Prov. xiv. 32. "The righteous hath hope in his death," his thoughts being led to it by the death of this religious gentlewoman.

Mr. Hardware was now arrived at a good old age, under the infirmities that usually attend that stage of life; he had lost a very lovely, wife, tender, and careful relation. He lingered out near six years after her, and in the year 1709, April 2. he finished his course, in the eighty-fourth year of his age, having this honourable testimony given him by his son Henry, "That he was a very conscientious gentleman, a serious good Christian, remarkable for his temperance and love to the duty of prayer, a true old Puritan." He was buried in Bromborough church, Mr. Henry preaching in the hall on that occasion from Gen. xlvii. 9. "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been;" the most but few, and the easiest but evil. He adds, "I gave him the character which I think he deserved."

Nor was he less affectionately concerned for the family to which he had the honour to be related by his second marriage. Grange was a place he often visited; and he frequently mentions, with thankfulness, the many sweet opportunities they had there of worshipping God, during the life of that worthy gentleman his father Warburton, which, though under great affliction, was lengthened out till the year 1696, and then he was seized with a stroke of the palsy and apoplexy, and for several hours had a hard struggle with dying agonies; and on the 14th of April, about three o'clock in the afternoon, fell asleep in Jesus. He was interred at Wareham; Mr. Murrall preached the funeral sermon, and gave him an honourable character.

One that acquitted himself so well as Mr. Henry did of his duty to his parents on both sides, may very well be supposed to act with tenderness and affection in the conjugal relation. He was a prudent, faithful, and kind husband. I need not enlarge; the sorrows, I had almost said the immoderate sorrows, of her that survives him, besides many other witnesses, too plainly shew the sense she has how great a blessing she had in him, and how happy they were in each other.

His letters, his diary, all his papers, are full of the most convincing tokens of his most affectionate regard to her on all occasions.

I must take the liberty to represent him a little to the world in the relation of a brother. Here, I think, few come up to him; and none, that ever I knew, excelled him. I have observed, that three of the sisters had their lot cast in Chester; these had the opportunity of receiving more frequent tokens of his affection and concern for them. How often do we find him visiting them, praying with them, sympathising with them in all their trials, blessing God for them. His diary is much taken up with instances of this nature; one cannot read it without pleasure. Here was nothing of emulation among them, nothing of disgust, no discontent, or shyness and strangeness; they were, in the truest and best sense, a family of love, and were as much one in their affection and interest, when distinguished into families of their own, as when they lived together in their father's house.

But it was not long before death broke this happy knot. Their father led them the way to heaven in dying, as he had done before in living; and the very next year two of his daughters followed him, Mrs. Radford and Mrs. Hulton, the two youngest; for the shadow of death is without order.

A very malignant fever prevailed in Chester in the year 1696; all the three sisters were visited by it. Mrs. Tyllston first fell ill, and was brought down to the very gates of death. On the 6th of August, when Mr. Henry returned from a meeting of the ministers at Nantwich, he found her extremely ill, but pathetically praying for an assurance of eternal glory, and, after some expressions of doubt and conflict, she broke out into these words, "Well, I believe I shall not go to hell." God was pleased to give a reviving both to soul and body; he had yet more work for her to do, for the honour of God and the good of her family.

But Mrs. Radford, who was seized the same day, did not escape; her fever came not so soon to the height, but it proved fatal. The account her brother gives of it is, that the distemper had seized very much her head and nerves: she was seldom sensible, so as to take notice of any thing. She had a stormy passage to the haven of rest, on the 13th of August the same year. "She was (says he) a humble, quiet, silent Christian; and I doubt not but that death was gain to

her, unspeakable gain. O that I could get good by this great affliction! The death of parents minds us of dying some time; but the death of brothers and sisters, of near the same age with ourselves, minds us of dying quickly. The Lord make me ready."

On the 16th thus: "I have been this day attending my dear sister Radford to the grave, the house appointed for all the living. It grieves me to part with so dear a relation; but I desire that Christ may be all in all to me. She was buried in Michael's church; and while we are mourning for this loss, we have the news that dear sister Savage is safely delivered of a daughter: thus we are singing of mercy and judgment." On the occasion of this funeral, Mr. James Owen preached from Rev. ii. 7. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

On the 30th day of the same month, God proceeded to contend with them. The youngest sister, Mrs. Hulton, who, if any one more than another was the darling of the family, (and the youngest is often so) fell ill of the same malignant distemper. She had no strong constitution, the fever made haste, and prevailed greatly in a little time. Mr. Henry's account of it is, That on the 3d of September they sought to God for her; they wept, and made supplication; and he adds, "This day she is a little better;" but then the next day he says, "My dear sister Hulton, my true friend, and one whom Christ loves, is very sick, grows worse and worse: it is a fore breach that God threatens us with. This afternoon she begins to be delirious; a little before she said to me, 'Brother, there is something worse than affliction.' I have been earnest with God for her recovery; I find it hard to submit; let the grace of Christ be sufficient for me. I have said it, and I do not unsay it, Lord, thy will be done."

The next day, which was the Lord's day, he writes thus: "My dear sister hath been all this day in the valley of the shadow of death, delirious, talking inconsistently, but with great mixture of piety and seriousness; but it is afflicting to me, that one who was so wont to open her mouth with wisdom, and never spoke an impertinent word, should now, through the force of the distemper, speak so many, when just entering into the world of everlasting light. 'Lord, thy way is in the sea.' The next night she came something to herself; but her spirits and speech failed. She said, 'Here

is nothing but confusion and emptiness, but it will not be long so.' The next morning, between seven and eight, she quietly, without any struggle, fell asleep, resigning up her soul into the arms of the Lord Jesus Christ, having not finished the 29th year of her age. So soon is she gone to the spirits of just men made perfect: and thus our wounds are multiplied. Lord, shew us wherefore thou contendest with us. On the 8th, the despised broken vessel, which had held a great treasure, was laid up safely in the grave in Bride's Church, Mr. Lawrence preaching on the occasion, from Job vii. 6. 'I loath it, I would not live always.' Lord, I would not always live in this world."

Two years after this Mr. Henry's afflictions were renewed upon him. In the year 1699, God took away his brothers-in-law, Dr. Tylston and Mr. Radford, both religious and useful persons, that dearly loved him, and were beloved by him.

Dr. Tylston was indeed an extraordinary person, both for intellectual and gracious endowments. He was born not many miles from Broad Oak, intimately acquainted with that family from his youth; he was of Trinity College in Oxford, and made a great proficiency in every sort of valuable learning. He chiefly applied himself to the study of physic, and took his doctor's degree at Aberdeen in Scotland, to escape ensnaring oaths. He afterwards lived and practised physic with the famous Dr. Sydenham; he married Mr. Henry's second sister, and lived sometime at Whitechurch, but afterwards removed to Chester, and became very eminent and useful in his profession.

He had, two years before he died, been dangerously ill of the same fever his two sisters died of; but he recovered, though never to that degree of health he had before. This last distemper came gradually upon him, but weakened and wasted him very much; and at length, on the first of April 1692, the fever broke out with violence, but his mind continued calm and resigned, saying to those about him, "What we desire we think is best, but God's will we are sure is best." He spoke with admiration of the glorious mansions above, and the glorious inhabitants there. He owned, that to think of the great account might well make any one tremble, but said he was satisfied in the favour of God. He charged his son never to affect any new notions in religion, whatever he did in philosophy. The next day he continued in the same

excellent frame, repenting of sin, professing his faith in Christ, and his comfortable expectation of the glory to be revealed. He expressed a great concern for the church of God, and blessed God that he had kept him from Deism and Socinianism, and that God had blessed him in his profession; and said, if he had thought his time had been so short, he would not have spent so much of it in the study of Heathen authors, but that he did it with a good design. He expressed a great willingness to die. Not long after this discourse, he began to be delirious, and as that came upon him, he had a great conflict in his soul. The next day his delirium went off, repeated prayers were made for his recovery, and they had some hope; but on the 6th day of the month, in the afternoon, all hopes failed them; his spirits sunk, he received the sentence of death in himself, solemnly took leave of his children with good counsel, pressing upon them diligence in duty, and a care to do that which may be reflected on with comfort at death, bore witness to the pleasantness of the ways of wisdom, and declared the good hope he had through grace of eternal life.

Thus he continued gradually declining till the 8th day of the month, and about eleven o'clock that night, being Saturday, just before the sabbath begun, he fell asleep in Jesus, not only no sting in his death, but no bands in it, not the least groan or gasp, but only a cessation of breathing, on which Mr. Henry writes, "*Sic mihi contingat vivere sicque mori.*" He was buried on the 11th day, in Trinity Church, in a burying-place belonging to Alderman Pool, and in the disposal of his brother Hulton. The Rev. Mr. Henry Newcome of Titnal, his intimate and kind friend, preached his funeral-sermon, from Phil. i. 21. "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." He gave him a just, that is, a very honourable character.

On the lecture-day following, Mr. Henry indulged his sorrow by preaching from 2 Sam. i. 26. "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan, very pleasant hast thou been unto me;" endeavouring, according to his own words, to make a good improvement of so sad a providence. Those that would take a further view of his affection to Dr. Tylston, may consult the postscript added to the third edition of the life of Mr. Philip Henry, where you have his just character drawn up by him that knew him so well, and was so good a judge of whatever was truly excellent.

Afflictions seldom come alone, this good family found it so; for this same year, in the month of August, on the 16th day, Mr. Radford fell sick of a fever, and on the 20th, the Lord's day, he died. The day before he died, many fervent prayers were put up to God for him, that since the mother had been taken away before, the children might not now be left fatherless too. Mr. Radford had been grave and serious from his youth. When he came to die, he was somewhat uneasy about his affairs in the world; but expressed himself with great satisfaction as to his soul. The morning that he died, he desired he might be solemnly given up to God in prayer, and then declared an entire confidence in the righteousness and mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ. He acknowledged many infirmities, but said, if he knew his own heart, it was sincere with God. He spoke very well till within a few minutes before he died. About eight of the clock in the morning he finished his course. He was newly entered on his 41st year, and was interred on the 22d day of the month. Mr. Henry preached on this sorrowful occasion, from Psal. lxxxviii. 18. "Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness." "My aim (says he) was to improve the providence for the good of many; the Lord sanctify it to us all." Many lamented the poor infants, now forsaken of father and mother.

By the death of Mr. Radford, a great load of trouble and care fell upon Mr. Henry, which he thought it his duty to undertake, though he foresaw it would be some hindrance to him in his work; but the providence of God cast it upon him, and he durst not decline it. His love to the dear children would not suffer him to stand by and see all their affairs run into confusion. He took upon him the administration of Mr. Radford's estate, on which he says, "I took the oath in the bishop's court, with a resolution, by the grace of God, strictly to observe it, and I have earnestly prayed that he would give me renewed degrees of wisdom for this new care." In another place, he says, "I am much taken up with brother Radford's affairs, in which I am as one out of my element; but God's providence, my own conscience, and a tender concern for the orphans, oblige me to it." And it proved very happy for them that their affairs were in such a hand; for by his great prudence and diligence in that matter, to which God was pleased to give his blessing, effects were got in, debts paid, and all matters so disposed, that so much was

saved for the children, as may, through the blessing of God, put them into a capacity to live comfortably in the world.

I think it my duty to mention it, as a thing very praiseworthy in Mrs. Henry, that she was far from opposing the kind designs her husband had for these afflicted relations; she heartily joined with him in doing all the good offices she could for them; she took several of them into the house, and though she had a growing family of her own, and but a weakly constitution, she took care of the orphans, and treated them as her own. Some of them were in the family several years, and knew very little of the want either of a father or a mother; they took instructions well, and much improved in their uncle's family; they sought the God of their fathers betimes, and have taken hold of his covenant, and he has blessed them; they all very thankfully own Mrs. Henry's great tenderness and affection towards them, they honour her as a mother, and I doubt not but she has in this approved herself to God, and that he will not suffer her or hers to be losers by it in the end. There are so few instances of this nature in our days, and so many to the contrary, that I could not forbear to take notice of this, that, if possible, others may be provoked by it to love and good works.

I have been somewhat large upon the subject of Mr. Henry's relative religion, and could yet add much more; every branch of the several families to which he was related had a share in his affectionate concern. He used to set apart some time to pray for them by name, and not for them only, but for his intimate friends, who were looked upon by him as relations, and treated as such. He was very kind in writing good letters to his friends on all occasions, and very speedy in answering theirs: his letters were full of prudent advice, most pleasant and ingenious observations, and all breathing true Christian love and friendship; diverting, and at the same time improving the many that he favoured with his friendship and correspondence. I believe they all esteem his letters as a great treasure, and carefully preserve them as such; I am sure some do, and love to look over them, in which it seems that he, being dead, yet speaketh.

Those that think I have dwelt too long upon this head, would do well to remember, that in relative piety the reality and excellency of religion appear as much as in any thing else; what a happy tendency has it, where it thus prevails, to make families easy and comfortable? If all our families

were composed of persons of such a temper and spirit as we have seen in Mr. Henry, we should enjoy not only a church in the house, but even an heaven on earth: and though it be but a melancholy thing to write and read so much as here we have done of sickness, deaths, and funerals, yet these are what all our families must be looking and preparing for; and nothing but a vital principle of divine grace can give us either sufficient direction or support, when such trying times come upon us. Religion must needs be the best thing at all times, for it is evidently the best in a time of affliction.

CHAP. IV.

His ministerial Conduct, more abundant Labours, Wisdom, Diligence, Faithfulness, Acceptance, and Success, in all the Parts of his Work, for many Years in Chester, and the Parts adjacent.

WE have seen Mr. Henry brought by a good providence to Chester, and very comfortably settled there; we have taken a view of him in his Christian economy and relative religion, his excellent spirit and behaviour both under the smiles and frowns of providence. Hitherto his ministerial performances have been only touched upon incidentally, and with a respect to the changes God was pleased to make in his family, and among his friends.

But the ministry was his chosen and delightful business; to this he was entirely devoted, and in this he did truly spend himself, and was spent; and it is from thence that we must draw the principal, most lively, and distinguishing parts of his character. It has been often said, "*Magistratus ostendit virum*," let a man be made a magistrate, and you shall soon know what he is: the ministry will as effectually discover the man as the magistracy, and much more; as it is an office attended with greater difficulties and temptations, it certainly requires another and more excellent spirit than what generally prevails in the world.

And when the case is such, that the ministers find themselves obliged in conscience to exercise their office in a way

different from the national establishment, there is something in it of yet more peculiar discrimination, and especially when they are allowed to do it in a public manner; they have common prejudices to encounter, and some of them very inveterate ones; the stream of custom will bear strongly in upon them, they are obnoxious to popular suspicions and jealousies, their conduct is observed with no very favourable eye; every body thinks he has a right to examine, with some severity, the temper, behaviour, and performances of those that go out of the common road under pretence of conscience, and cannot in all things submit to the dictates of their superiors in church or state. These scrupulous persons make themselves a kind of spectacle to the world; every doubtful step they take will be censured, every false step aggravated, and the error will presently be transferred from the person to the cause; and since their Non-conformity is judged to be a condemning of the constitution, those that adhere to the constitution will be too well pleased with any occasion that is given to condemn that Non-conformity.

These are the common and natural inconveniencies that attend a dissent from the established church in matters of sacred administration: they are generally the same every where, whether on the south or north side of the Tweed, and they rather result from what is common to human nature in its imperfect state, than from any thing peculiar to this or that party of men as such.

Under these disadvantages, Mr. Henry set out in the ministry, and went on to the last; and even these things, which so often serve to expose men of weak and unwary minds, contributed to his honour. These shades helped to set him in a true light, and gave him the fairer opportunity of letting the world see the humility, self-denial, candour, integrity, and wisdom, with which he was so richly furnished.

No sooner did he come to Chester, the place to which God had so manifestly called him, but he immediately set himself to perform his vows; he was in labours more abundant, both in the city and in the country adjacent. Surely, if ever man fulfilled his ministry since the apostolic age, he was the man. No body looks upon his prodigious industry as a common measure, to which all others are obliged to come up; those that have not the strength of body, freedom and readiness of thought, natural fervour and easiness of expression, can no more come up to his standard, as to the multitude, va-

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riety, and excellency of ministerial services, than a child can bear a strong man's burden.

We must not plead this disparity of abilities in excuse for our sinful defects: had we begun as early with God and religion as he did, and as well improved our morning time, had we been as much in prayer and other preparatory work for the ministry, had we entered upon it with the same awful concern, and kept up in our minds that lively sense of the majesty of God, the worth of souls, and the reality of an eternal world, we might have come nearer to him both in labours and success than most of us do; but God will have his distinguished worthies in every age, and in ours Mr. Henry was one of the first rate.

His labours were so many and great that, in order to our taking a particular view of them, it will be necessary to reduce them to their proper heads, of which you may take the following scheme. They were either such as he was conversant in,

I. At home among his own people; and these were either,

1. Constant; as on the Lord's day, on lecture-days, catechising on Saturdays, and monthly sacraments, conferences, and congregational fasts: or,

2. Occasional; and these are either,

(1) Public, as fasts and thanksgivings; or,

(2) Private, on family occasions, visiting the sick, admonitions, visiting and preaching to the prisoners at the castle, and reformation sermons.

II. Abroad in neighbouring places and congregations; as lectures in several places, meetings of ministers, ordination of ministers, funeral sermons for ministers and others, and yearly journies to visit the churches.

We must begin with the ministerial labours he performed at home among his own people; for though his soul was too large to be confined to them, yet he was very sensible they had the best title to his services, and he never would injure them to supply other churches.

His constant work on the Lord's day at Chester, was to pray six times in public, to sing six times, to expound twice, and preach twice; and this he did for many years together. His method was,

After having worshipped God in his family, in the manner that has been already mentioned, he went to the congrega-

tion exactly at nine of the clock, began the public worship with singing the 100th psalm, then made a short but fervent and suitable prayer, then he read some part of the Old Testament, and expounded it, going through it in course from the beginning to the end, then he sung another psalm, then he prayed for about half an hour, then he preached about an hour, then prayed, and sung usually the 117th psalm, and then gave the blessing. He did the same exactly in the afternoon, only then he expounded out of the New Testament, and sung at the end the 134th psalm, or some verses of the 136th. This was his constant Lord's day's work.

In singing he always made use of David's psalms, or other scripture hymns: he collected a set of them, such as he thought most useful and edifying, and digested them under proper titles, according to the occasions to which they were adapted. He preferred scripture psalms and hymns far before those that are wholly of human composition, which are generally liable to this exception, that the fancy is too high, and the matter too low, and sometimes such as a wise and good man may not be able, with entire satisfaction, to offer up as a sacrifice to God. In this work of praise he took great delight: one might easily discern how his soul was on the wing; it was a part of worship for which his soul was particularly formed, being himself of an affectionate, cheerful, thankful temper.

In prayer his gifts and graces eminently appeared. He had a wonderful faculty of engaging the attention, and raising the affections of his assembly. In his second prayer he was always copious, though never tedious. He was very full in confession of sin, and very tender and humble, aggravating the evil and guilt of it in a very clear and convincing manner. His prayer was always suited to the state of the congregation, to the season, to the state of the nation, and of the church of God. In supplication for mercy he was very earnest and particular, pleading the name, and sufferings, and mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ for pardon and peace. He was large and full in praying for grace, and used to mention the particular graces of the Holy Spirit, as faith, love, hope, patience, delight in God, earnestly begging that these graces might be truly wrought in all, and might be preserved, exercised, increased, and evidenced, to the glory of the God of all grace.

In supplications for the afflicted he was very particular, seldom forgetting any case that was either known to himself, or put up in writing: his requests were very pertinent to the case, and the sympathy of his heart with the afflicted was very apparent, by the tender and affectionate manner in which he used to plead with God for them.

In his requests for the nation, he was constant and earnest; many a time has he wrestled with God in the pulpit for the land of his nativity; and herein he expressed himself with humility, meekness, and wisdom, carefully avoiding whatever might appear disrespectful to our governors: and though he knew not how to give flattering titles, lest his God should cut him off, yet his prayers for those in authority discovered the reverence he had for the government, as the ordinance of God, and for those that God had invested with it. All seditious, saucy reflections upon the ruler of the people, how artfully soever couched, he utterly disliked in common conversation, and therefore could never be guilty of profaning the worship of God with them.

As a watchman that God had set upon the walls of Jerusalem, he thought it his duty to give him no rest till he had established his church, and made her a praise in the midst of the earth. The state of the reformed churches was much upon his heart, according to the trials and dangers they were exposed to from time to time; and many a fervent prayer of his is still upon file, for the poor remains, or rather ruins of the French churches, that God would build those waste places, and come to the seeming perpetual desolations, and restore to his people their lost privileges; and though he did not live to see what he so much desired, yet, as he prayed for them, so he believed for them, that God would appoint them a set time and remember them, that the year of the redeemed would come, even the year of recompences for the controversies of Sion, often referring to that text, Hab. ii. 3. "The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it will speak and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, for it will surely come, it will not tarry."

The exposition of the Scriptures was a very pleasant part of his work, both in his house and in the house of God; what his expositions were from the pulpit may be gathered by what they appear to be from the press. His father's example led him to take delight in this part of his work, and made it easy to him; and while some commentators take a

great deal of pains to make plain things dark, his endeavour always was to make dark things plain, and not only plain, but moving and practical. He kept very close and constant to his business of expounding, and never omitted it, even on the sacrament day. In the time he was at Chester, he went through the whole Bible more than once; and, by this means, his people have been observed to excel in their acquaintance with the holy Scriptures.

How great a talent he had in preaching, the world is not ignorant, so many of his sermons being published, and spread far and wide. He was very happy in the choice of his subjects; there could no occasion happen, either public or private, but as he was ever ready to preach upon it, so he had always an apposite text to preach upon. Being a scribe well instructed in the kingdom of God, he had a treasure out of which he could easily bring things new and old.

The method into which he used to cast his sermons, was plain and proper; his heads of discourse neither few nor many, but always well adjusted; his expression had this excellency, that it was at once both comprehensive and perspicuous; his style was sententious, but not cramped; his elocution natural, without any odd or affected tone, and yet very lively, and such as engaged attention; his matter was always genuine and just to his subject, he knew how to speak great and weighty things upon every head, and to back every thing with proper texts of Scripture; he had a mighty warmth of spirit both in praying and preaching, which would often, especially in his younger years, transport him into tears, and raise his auditory to the same pitch of affection.

In his diary, Sept. 10. 1699, I find this note, "This day I preached of God the chief good, from Psal. lxxiii. 26. 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee.' I had some enlargement of affections, and I find some prejudice to my bodily strength by my over earnestness; but I cannot help it, for I believe the things I speak to be true and great, and I would be in my work as one that is in earnest."

His preaching was truly evangelical, spiritual, and practical. He shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God. He loved to preach of Christ, and in his diary often declares, "He was best pleased when he was upon that sweet subject." Having preached concerning Christ as our passover, and his blood sprinkled upon the saints as their safety, Nov. 20.

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1690, he has this remark, "It is most pleasant to me to be preaching Christ." And afterwards, "I am most in my element when I am preaching Christ and him crucified;" and he loved that others should preach Christ. In the year 1709, May 1. he has recorded it, "This day Mr. Basnet preached, Gal. iv. 5. 'God sent forth his Son;' he preached much of Christ, whom I love to hear of." And Feb. 12. 1710, having expounded five of Solomon's Songs, he adds, "The more I think and speak of Christ, the more reason I see to love him."

But he thought it also necessary to preach up holiness, and did constantly affirm it as a faithful saying, "That they that believe on God should be careful to maintain good works." This saying, he knew, was as faithful in its place, as that "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Both of them are faithful sayings, not only true in themselves, but such as ministers are bound in faithfulness to insist upon in their preaching; such preaching is faithful preaching, a faithful saying.

In his more constant way of preaching, he fixed upon a certain set of subjects, fitly ranged and methodised under general heads; but, together with these, there were intermixed many occasional discourses, suited to the state of the people, or to any remarkable dispensations of Providence, which he was always very careful to observe, and to record, and improve by preaching, to the advantage of himself and others.

His method of subjects that he preached upon for twenty-five years together at Chester, I have received, as it was drawn up by himself a little while before he left that place; and I think it well worth a room in these memoirs, as it shews him to be a "workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

The first sermon he preached publicly in Chester, June 2. 1687, on Thursday, the lecture-day, was from 1 Cor. ii. 2. "For I determined to know nothing among you, but Jesus Christ and him crucified." He then expounded the 1st Psalm, and so went on expounding the Psalms on lecture-days, and went over them five times during his continuance there, always with variety of matter.

In July he began a set of sermons to open the misery of a sinful state, from Rev. iii. 17. "Thou sayest I am rich;" and from Eph. ii. 1. "You hath he quickened who were dead

in trespasses and sins;" and from John viii. 34. "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin."

In October he began a set of sermons about conversion, from Matth. xi. 28--30. "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden;" and from Ezekiel xviii. 30, 31. "Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so shall not iniquity be your ruin;" and from Jer. iii. 22. "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backidings;" and from Job xxii. 21. "Acquaint thyself now with him, and be at peace;" and from Luke xi. 21, 22. "When a strong man armed keepeth the house;" and then opened the conversion of Paul, Acts ix. 1. with evidences of grace. Upon this subject he continued till July 1689, almost two years.

In August following, he entered upon the subject of a well-ordered conversation, from Psal. 1.; and from several texts laid down twenty directions for the right ordering the conversation.

1st, Fix a right principle of true grace in the heart, 2 Cor. i. 12. Not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, I have had my conversation in the world.

2d, Eye the gospel of Christ as your great rule, Philip. i. 27. Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ.

3d, Set the Lord always before you, Psal. xvi. 8. I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

4th, Keep your hearts with all diligence, Prov. iv. 23. Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.

5th, Abide always under the rule of the fear of God, Prov. xxiii. 17. But be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.

6th, Be not conformed to this world, Rom. xii. 2. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.

7th, Live in a constant dependence upon the Lord Jesus Christ, Col. iii. 17. Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.

8th, Take your affections off from present things, 1 John ii. 15. Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world.

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9th, Be always standing upon your watch, Mark xiii. 37. What I say unto you, I say unto all, watch.

10th, Keep a conscience void of offence, Acts xxiv. 16. Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men.

11th, Live by faith, Gal. ii. 20. The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

12th, Be much in communing with your own heart, Psal. iv. 4. Stand in awe and sin not, commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.

13th, Set a double watch before the door of your lips, Psal. xxxix. 1. I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle.

14th, Follow the steps of the Lord Jesus, 1 Pet. ii. 21. Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps.

15th, Lay before you the example of the saints, Heb. vi. 12. That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience now inherit the promises.

16th, Be very cautious what company you keep, Prov. xiii. 20. He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.

17th, Make conscience how you spend your time, Eph. v. 16. Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

18th, Pray to God for holy wisdom, James i. 5. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask it of God.

19th, Be often thinking of death and judgment, 2 Pet. iii. 11. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?

20th, Converse much with heaven, Phil. iii. 20. For our conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour.

When he had finished a set of sermons, he used, in a sermon or two, to make a recapitulation of the substance of what had been delivered. This course of sermons upon the conversation, held him almost a year and a half, and then (to use his own words) having thus laboured for conversion and a good conversation, he next endeavoured for the consolation of God's people, from Isa. xl. 1. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God." And, in order to this, he

proposed to open the covenant of grace as the great spring of comfort, from 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant."

This covenant he opened and explained very particularly, shewing what the covenant contained in it. This he begun in March, 1691.

(1) God in the covenant, Heb. viii. 10. I will be to them a God; that is,

1st, A father, 2 Cor. vi. 18. I will be a father to you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

2d, A husband; Thy Maker is thy husband, the Lord of hosts is his name, and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel.

3d, A shepherd, Psal. xxiii. 1. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

4th, A king, Psal. xlv. 4. Thou art my king, O God, command deliverances for Jacob.

5th, A sun and shield, Psal. lxxxiv. 11. The Lord God is a sun and shield, the Lord will give grace and glory.

6th, A portion, Lam. iii. 24. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him.

7th, A constant guide, Psal. xlviii. 14. For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death.

Inference; we must be to him a people, Heb. viii. 10. They shall be to me a people.

(2) Christ in the covenant, Isa. xlix. 8. I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people; that is, by this covenant Christ is,

1st, Our Righteousness, Jer. xxiii. 6. This is his name whereby he shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

2d, Our Life, Col. iii. 4. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

3d, Our Peace, Eph. ii. 14. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, &c.

4th, Our Hope, 1 Tim. i. 1. God our Saviour, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our hope.

5th, Our Redeemer, Job xix. 25. I know that my Redeemer liveth.

6th, Our High-priest, Heb. iii. 1. Consider the Apostle and High-priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.

7th, Our Captain, Heb. ii. 10. To make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

8th, Our Fore-runner, Heb. vi. 20. Whither the Fore-runner is for us entered, even Jesus.

9th, Our Friend, Cant. v. 16. This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend.

Inference; We must make Christ ours, Cant. ii. 16. My beloved is mine, and I am his.

(3) The Holy Spirit in the covenant, Eph. i. 13. After ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise. By this covenant the Spirit is,

1st, A Teacher, John xiv. 26. The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things.

2d, A Comforter, John xiv. 16, 17. I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth.

3d, A Spirit of adoption, Rom. viii. 15. Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

4th, An Earnest, 2 Cor. i. 22. Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

Inference; Grieve not the Spirit, Eph. iv. 30. Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Thus God is in the covenant God the Father, Son, and Spirit.

(4) Pardon of sin in the covenant, Heb. viii. 12. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

(5) Peace in the covenant, John xiv. 27. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.

(6) Grace in the covenant, Heb. viii. 10. This is the covenant, I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts.

(7) Access to God in the covenant, Eph. ii. 18. For through him we have both an access by one Spirit unto the Father.

(8) Ordinances in the covenant, Ezek. xxxvii. 26. I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore.

(9) Providences in the covenant, Rom. viii. 28. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.

(10) Angels in the covenant, Heb. i. 14. Are they not

all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them that shall be heirs of salvation?

(11) The creatures in the covenant, 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22. All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, &c.

(12) Afflictions in the covenant, Psal. lxxxix. 30, 32. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments, then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, &c.

(13) Death in the covenant, 1 Cor. iii. 22. Or life, or death.

(14) Heaven in the covenant, Tit. i. 2. In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.

This set of sermons upon the covenant of grace took up near a year and a half, from February 1691 to July 1692; he closed them with a repetition-sermon from Isa. lv. 2. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

After this, he entered upon the subject of sanctification. The manner in which he handled it was particular, but very proper. He first treated of the sin that was to be mortified, and then of the contrary grace that was to be exercised: he began with the general nature of sanctification, and then descended to the several parts of it.

In general, from Eph. iv. 22, 24, Put off the old man--put on the new; the one in dying to sin, the other in living to righteousness.

In particular, 1st, Put off pride, Jer. xiii. 15, and put on humility, 1 Pet. v. 5.

2d, Put off passion, Col. iii. 8. and put on meekness, 1 Pet. iii. 4.

3d, Put off covetousness, Heb. xiii. 5. put on contentment, Heb. xiii. 5.

4th, Put off contention, Gen. xiii. 8. and put on peaceableness, James iii. 17.

5th, Put off murmuring, 1 Cor. x. 10. and put on patience, Luke xxi. 19.

6th, Put off melancholy, Psal. xlii. 11. and put on cheerfulness, Psal. xxxvii. 4.

7th, Put off vanity, Eccl. ii. 2. and put on seriousness, 1 Pet. iv. 7.

8th, Put off uncleanness, Gal. v. 19. and put on chastity, 1 Thess. iv. 4.

9th, Put off drunkenness, Luke xxi. 34. and put on temperance, 2 Pet. i. 6.

10th, Put off deceitfulness, Col. iii. 9. and put on honesty, 1 Pet. ii. 12.

11th, Put off hatred, Lev. xix. 17. and put on love, John xv. 12.

12th, Put off hypocrisy, Luke xii. 1. and put on sincerity, Josh. xxiv. 14.

13th, Put off bad discourse, Eph. iv. 22. and put on good discourse, Eph. iv. 29.

14th, Put off bad company, Psal. cxix. 115. and put on good company, Psal. cxix. 63.

15th, Put off security, 1 Theff. v. 6. and put on watchfulness, 1 Theff. v. 6.

16th, Put off slothfulness, Rom. xii. 11. and put on diligence, 2 Pet. iii. 14.

17th, Put off folly, Psal. lxxv. 4. and put on prudence, Prov. xiv. 8.

18th, Put off fear, Gen. xv. 1. and put on hope, Prov. xiv. 32. 1 Pet. i. 13.

19th, Put off a life of sense, 2 Cor. iv. 18. and put on a life of faith, Gal. ii. 20.

20th, Put off self, Matth. xvi. 24. and put on Jesus Christ, Rom. xiii. 14.

This course of sermons on sanctification took him up near the space of two years; it was finished in April 1694, with a recapitulation from Col. iii. 9, 10. Ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.

He then proceeded to treat on the subject of divine worship; he began with a general discourse on Matth. vi. 10. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God; and then distinctly considered,

(1) Ordinances of worship; such as,

1st, Reading the scriptures, 1 Theff. v. 27. I charge you by the Lord, that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.

2d, Hearing the word, from Acts x. 33. Now therefore, we are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

3d, Prayer, from Eph. vi. 18. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.

4th, Praise, Heb. xiii. 15. By him therefore let us offer up the sacrifice of praise continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.

5th, Singing of psalms, Col. iii. 16. Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

6th, The Lord's supper, 1 Cor. xi. 23. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, &c.

(2) Opportunities, or occasions of worship.

1st, In secret, from Matth. vi. 6. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, &c.

2d, In families, Josh. xxiv. 15. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. At our meals, 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5. Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. Here he preached of catechising and education, Prov. xxii. 6. Train up a child in the way he should go.

3d, In public, from Heb. x. 25. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, &c.

4th, Especially on the Lord's day, from Deut. v. 12. Keep the sabbath-day to sanctify it, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee.

(3) Of the manner of worship.

1st, In spirit and in truth, from John iv. 24. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.

2d, With reverence and godly fear, Heb. xii. 28. Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.

3d, With joy and rejoicing, Psal. c. 2. Serve the Lord with gladness, come before his presence with singing.

4th, With holiness, Psal. xxix. 2. Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

5th, With freedom of heart to the duty, Psal. xxvii. 8. When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.

6th, With fixedness of heart to the duty, Psal. lvii. 7. My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.

(4) Of the Mediator of worship, from John xiv. 6. Jesus

faith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me.

Our duty to Christ the Mediator.

1st, To know Christ, Phil. iii. 10. That I may know him, &c.

2d, To love Christ, 1 Pet. i. 8. Whom having not seen, ye love, &c.

3d, To honour Christ, John v. 23. That all men should honour the Son, &c.

4th, To trust in Christ, Eph. i. 12. Who first trusted in Christ.

5th, To walk in Christ, Col. ii. 6. So walk ye in him.

6th, To rejoice in Christ, Phil. iii. 3. And rejoice in Christ Jesus.

These discourses were not finished till 1696, and were followed with another set, concerning our duty to our neighbours, the introductory sermon from Gal. v. 14. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; that is,

1st, We must take cognisance of our neighbour's concerns, Phil. ii. 4. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

2d, We must render to all their due, Rom. xiii. 7. Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, &c.

3d, We must speak truth to one another, Zech. viii. 16. These are the things that ye shall do, Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour.

4th, We must do as we would be done by, Matth. vii. 12. Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.

5th, We must live peaceably with all men, Rom. xii. 18. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

6th, We must succour and relieve those that are poor and in distress, Lev. xxv. 35. If thy brother be grown poor, and fallen in decay with thee, then thou shalt relieve him, yea, though he be a stranger or a sojourner, &c.

7th, We must forgive those that have injured us, Col. iii. 13. Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

8th, We must please our neighbours for their good, Rom. xv. 2, 3. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification, for even Christ pleased not himself, &c.

9th, We must reprove those that do amiss, Eph. v. 11. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

10th, We must bear one another's burdens, Gal. vi. 2. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

11th, We must pray for one another, Jam. v. 16. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.

12th, We must provoke one another to love, and to good works, Heb. x. 24. And let us consider one another, to provoke to love, and to good works.

These sermons of our duty to Christ, and to our brethren, were finished April 26. 1696, with a recapitulation from 1 Cor. xii. 27. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

They were followed with some select discourses about the reasonableness of being truly religious, the introduction from Isa. i. 18. Come now, and let us reason together. The reasons for religion are,

1. The relation we stand in to God that made us, Psal. c.
2. The revelation of the will of God concerning us, Micah vi. 8.
3. The worth of our immortal souls, Matth. xvi. 26.
4. The wisdom of being religious, Job xxviii. 28.
5. The vanity and insufficiency of the world to make us happy, Eccles. i. 2, 3.
6. The vileness of sin, and its certain tendency to make us miserable, Jer. ii. 19.
7. The glorious discoveries of the Redeemer's love, 2 Cor. v. 14.
8. The great design of gospel grace, Luke i. 74, 75.
9. The mercies of God to us, Rom. xii. 1.
10. The malice of Satan against us, 1 Pet. v. 8.
11. The shortness of this present life, Heb. xiii. 14.
12. The sweetness of a religious life, Prov. iii. 17.
13. The seriousness of dying, Job xiv. 14.
14. The strictness of the judgment to come, Eccles. xii.

15. The state of rewards and punishments in the other world, Rom. ii. 6---9.

These were concluded with a repetition-sermon from the same text with which they were begun, Isa. i. 18. Come now, and let us reason together, &c.

He then considered the reasons or causes why so few are religious; as,

1. Ignorance, Jer. v. 4. They are foolish, they know not the way of the Lord.

2. Infidelity, Heb. iv. 2. The word preached did not profit, not being mixed with faith.

3. Inconsiderateness, Isa. i. 3. Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.

4. Pride, Psal. x. 4. The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God.

5. Prejudice, Acts xxviii. 22. Concerning this sect, we know it is every where spoken against.

6. Slothfulness, Luke xiii. 24. Strive to enter in at the strait gate, &c.

7. Self-conceit, Prov. xxvi. 12. Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit, &c.

8. The course of this world, Eph. ii. 2. Ye walked according to the course of this world.

9. Custom in sin, Jer. xiii. 23. Can the Ethiopian change his skin?

10. Worldly employment, Matth. xxii. 5. One to his farm, another to his merchandise.

11. Worldly enjoyments, Matth. xix. 24. It is easier for a camel, &c.

12. Love of pleasure, 2 Tim. iii. 4. Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

13. Love of the praise of man, John xii. 48. They loved the praise of men, &c.

14. In a word, the wicked will, Psal. lxxxii. 11. Israel would none of me.

This set of sermons brought him to the year 1698; and that year, in June, he began a body of divinity, which was his constant sabbath work, excepting on sacrament days. This body of divinity he had some thoughts of revising and publishing, if God had spared him time till he had finished his exposition on the New Testament; but since that has now become impossible, I think it worth our while to take a view of the general scheme and heads of that great work,

which took up so much of his time; for it continued till the year 1712. And God ordered it so, that this should be the business not only of a considerable part of his life, but of that part of it in which his thoughts must be supposed to be most mature, and he in the best capacity to treat upon a subject of such an excellent nature.

The introductory sermon was from Luke i. 4. That thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed. The general heads were as follow.

I. Concerning God.

I. That there is a God, Heb. xi. 6. He that cometh to God must believe that he is; and if there be a God, 1. It is a sad thing to live without God, Eph. ii. 12; and 2. It is a blessed thing to have him for our God, Psalm lxiii. 1.

II. That God is a being infinitely perfect and glorious.

1. He is a Spirit, John iv. 24.
 2. He is eternal, 1 Tim. i. 17.
 3. He is unchangeable, James i. 17.
 4. He is blessed, 1 Tim. i. 11.
 5. He is every where present, Psal. cxxxix. 7---10.
 6. He knows all things, Heb. iv. 13.
 7. He is infinitely wise, Rom. xvi. 27.
 8. He is a God of infinite power, Psal. lxii. 11.
 9. He is perfectly holy, Isa. vi. 3.
 10. He is infinitely just and righteous, Psal. cxlv. 17.
 11. He is infinitely good, Exod. xxxiv. 6. and doth good, Psal. cxix. 68. Common instances of God's goodness, Psal. cxlviii. 9. Special instances, Psal. lxxiii. 1. Application of God's goodness, Psal. xxxiv. 8.
 12. He is a God of inviolable truth, Psal. cxvii. 2.
- God's titles.
- He is El Shaddai, Gen. xvii. 1.
- Most High, and Possessor of heaven and earth, Gen. xiv.
19. Living God, and Everlasting King, Jer. x. 10.
- God of Love, and God of Peace, 2 Cor. xiii. 11.
- The Father, 1 John ii. 13.
- Conclusion of the subject; of God's Nature, Attributes, and Titles, Job xxvi. 14.

III. That the Lord Jehovah is the One only living and true God.

1. It concerns us to inquire after God, Job xxxv. 10.
2. We shall find that there is but one God, Mark xii. 31.
3. That the Lord is the only true God, John xvii. 3.
4. That there are Three Persons in the Godhead, 1 John v. 7.
5. That it is man's chief business to glorify God, 1 Cor. x. 31.
6. That it is man's chief happiness to enjoy God, Psal. lxxiii. 25, 26.

II. Concerning the Word of God.

1. That God's word to man is the spring and foundation of all religion, Rom. x. 7.
 2. That the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the word of God, 2 Tim. iii. 16.
 3. That the book of the Scriptures was written for our use and benefit, Rom. xv. 4.
 4. That the word of God is the standing rule of our faith and practice, Isa. viii. 20.
 5. That God is himself fulfilling the Scriptures, Mark xiv. 49.
 6. That the Scriptures ought to be translated into the vulgar tongue, Acts ii. 11.
- Inferences: 1. Love the word of God, Psal. cxix. 140.
2. Search into the word of God, John v. 39.
 3. Understand the word of God, Luke xxiv. 45.
 4. Meditate upon the word of God, Psal. i. 4.
 5. Live up to the word of God, Josh. i. 8.

III. Concerning the Works of God.

In general: 1. The works of God are to be diligently inquired into by us, Psal. cxi. 2.

2. His works are according to his own will, Psal. cxv. 3.
3. They are all according to his eternal decree, Eph. i. 11.

In particular: I. The work of creation.

1. That God made the world, Gen. i. 1.
2. That he made all well, and in six days, Gen. i. 31.
3. That he made all by his Son, Heb. i. 2.

Inferences: (1) Give glory to the Creator, Rev. iv. 11.

(2) Give thanks for the creatures, 1 Tim. iv. 3.

(3) Be encouraged to trust in God, Psal. cxxiv. 8.

II. The work of Providence.

1. Universal inspection, Prov. xv. 3.

2. Universal preservation, Neh. ix. 6.

3. Universal government, Psal. ciii. 17; concerning which observe,

(1) The providence of God orders both comfortable and afflictive events, Isa. xlv. 7.

(2) Providence sometimes rewards the good, and punisheth the wicked in this life, Prov. xi. 31.

(3) Sometimes Providence allots prosperity to the wicked in this world, Psal. lxxiii. 12.

Inference: 1. Observe the motions of Providence, Psal. cvii. last.

2. Admire the depths of Providence, Rom. xi. 33.

3. Comply with the designs of Providence, Philip. iv. 12.

IV. Concerning the Angels.

I. Good angels.

1. The angels are the creatures of God, Heb. i. 7.
2. They are attendants upon God, Psalm ciii. 20.
3. They are the subjects of the Lord Jesus Christ, Heb. i. 6.
4. They rejoice at the conversion of sinners, Luke xv. 10.
5. They are employed in ministering to the saints, Psalm xci. 11, 12.

6. By faith we are related to, and in communion with the holy angels, Heb. xii. 22.

II. Evil angels.

1. The devil is an apostate from God, 2 Peter ii. 4.
2. He is reprobate and abandoned, Heb. ii. 16.
3. He is a liar, and the father of lies, John viii. 44.
4. He is the old serpent, even Satan, Rev. xx. 2.

5. He is a tempter, 1 Theff. iii. 5.
6. We are to maintain a holy war against him, James iv.
- 7.

V. Concerning Man.

I. Of the creation of man, Acts xvi. 27. Made of one blood, &c.

II. Of man's body.

1. The meanness of the matter, Job xxxiii. 6. I am formed out of clay.
2. The curiousness of the form, Psal. cxxxix. 15.
3. The dignity of its use, 1 Cor. vi. 19.

III. Of the soul of man.

1. The existence of the soul, Job xxxii. 8. There is a spirit in man.

2. The immortality of the soul, Ecclef. iii. 21.

IV. Of man's relation to God, and one to another, Mal. ii. 10. Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us?

V. Of man's dominion over the creatures, Psal. viii. 6.

VI. Of the state in which man was created; he was,

1. Holy, Gen. i. 26.
2. Happy, Gen. ii. 15.
3. In a state of probation, Gen. ii. 17.

VI. Concerning Sin.

I. Of sin in general.

1. The nature of sin, 1 John iii. 4. Sin is the transgression of the law.

2. The sinfulness of sin, Rom. vii. 13. Exceeding sinful.

3. The foolishness of sin, Ecclef. vii. 25. The wickedness of folly.

4. The deceitfulness of sin, Heb. iii. 13.

Inferences: (1) Do not sin, 1 John ii. 1.

(2) Do not make a mock at sin, Prov. xiv. 9.

II. Of the entrance of sin.

1. The evidence we have of man's apostacy, Eccl. vii. 29.
2. The manner of the entrance of sin, Gen. iii. 1---4, &c.

III. Of the propagating of sin, Rom. v. 19.

IV. Of the extent of sin, Rom. iii. 23. its extent to each of us, Psal. li. 5.

- Inferences : 1. The necessity of regeneration, John iii. 7.
 2. The sovereign freeness of divine grace, Isa. xlviii. 11.

V. Some particulars of the corruption of nature.

1. The corruption of the understanding, Eph. iv. 8.
2. Of the imagination, Gen. viii. 21.
3. Of the will and affections, Rom. viii. 7.
4. Of the conscience, Jer. xvii. 9.

VI. The product of original corruption, which is actual transgression, Mark vii. 21.

VII. The miserable consequences of sin.

(1) Immediate, as to our first parents.

1. They withdrew from God, Gen. iii. 8.
2. God drove them from him, Gen. iii. 24.

(2) Remote, as to all their posterity.

1. Under God's wrath, Eph. ii. 3.
2. Under his curse, Gal. iii. 10.
3. Liable to all miseries of this life, Gen. iii. 17.
4. To death itself, Rom. v. 12.
5. To the pains of hell for ever, Matth. xxv. 46.

Use : (1) To those that are yet in this state, Gen. xix. 14. Up, get ye out of this place.

(2) To those that through grace are got out of it, Gen. xix. 17. Look not behind thee.

VII. Concerning our Redemption by Jesus Christ.

I. The prime author is God, Hos. xiii. 9. In me is thine help.

1. God's good-will to man designed our redemption, Tit. iii. 4.
2. God's wisdom contrived it, 1 Cor. ii. 7.
3. The patience of God left room for it, 2 Pet. iii. 15. Acts xiii. 18.

4. He hath chosen the remnant to be redeemed, 2 Theff. ii. 13.
5. He hath settled it in the covenant of redemption, John vi. 39.
6. He hath condescended to deal with us upon new terms, Rom. vi. 14.
7. He hath appointed and sent the Saviour, John iii. 16.
8. In Christ he reconciled us to himself, 2 Cor. v. 18.
- II. The undertaker of it is Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 5.
1. His three names, Jesus, Matth. i. 21; Christ, John i. 41; Our Lord, Eph. iii. 11.
2. His two natures, (1) He is God, John i. 1, 2; (2) He is Man, John i. 14.
- III. His incarnation.
1. He was conceived of the Holy Ghost, Matth. i. 29.
2. He came in the fulness of time, Gal. iv. 4.
3. Among the people of the Jews, Rom. ix. 5. He came,
- (1) To bear witness of the truth, John xviii. 37.
- (2) To destroy the works of the devil, 1 John iii. 7.
- (3) To seek and save those that were lost, Luke xix. 10.
- (4) That we might have life, John x. 10; he was willing to come, Heb. x. 7; and we ought to rejoice in his coming, Matth. xxi. 9.
- IV. His offices in general; he is a Mediator, 1 Tim. ii. 5.
15. In particular,
- 1st, He is a Prophet, John vi. 14.
1. He executed the office of a prophet in his own person on earth,
- (1) As a preacher, Matth. iv. 23.
- (2) As a worker of miracles, John iii. 25.
- (3) By his example, John xiii. 15.
2. He executes this office now he is in heaven,
- (1) By revealing God's will to us, John xvii. 26.
- (2) By revealing it in us, 1 John v. 20.
- 2dly, He is a Priest, Psal. cx. 4; a High-priest, Heb. ii. 17.
1. He offered sacrifice for sin, Heb. x. 12.
- (1) To reconcile us to God, by taking away our sins, Dan. ix. 24.
- (2) To recommend us to God, by sanctifying our services, 1 Pet. ii. 5.

2. He makes intercession, Heb. vii. 25. and therefore we should,

1. Hold fast our profession, Heb. iv. 14.

2. Draw near, Heb. iv. 15, 16.

3dly, He is a King.

1. He is constituted and appointed by the Father to be a King, Psal. ii. 6.

2. He is King as Mediator, John v. 27.

5. He is King over all the world, John iii. 35.

4. He is in a special manner King of the church, Zech. ix. 9. He executes the office of a King,

(1) In the conversion of souls to himself, Psal. cx. 3.

(2) In ruling his subjects, Zech. vi. 14.

(3) In protecting them, Mic. v. 5.

(4) In pardoning offences, Matth. ix. 6.

(5) In recompensing services, Rev. ii. 10.

(6) In restraining our enemies, Rev. xx. 1, 2.

(7) In conquering them, 1 Cor. xv. 25. Let us therefore do the duty of subjects, Jer. iii. 9. and dread the lot of enemies, Luke xix. 27.

V. His two estates.

1st, His humiliation, Phil. ii. 6. He humbled himself,

1. In the meanness of his birth, Luke ii. 16.

2. In his submission to the law, Gal. iv. 4.

3. In his life; which was,

(1) A life of poverty, no riches, Matth. viii. 20.

(2) A life of disgrace, no honours, Psal. xxii. 6.

(3) A life of sorrow, no pleasures, Isa. liii. 3. He suffered,

1. From his Father, Isa. liii. 10.

2. From Satan, Gen. iii. 15.

3. From wicked men, Gen. xvii. 22, 23.

4. In his death, the death of the cross, Phil. ii. 8.

5. In his burial, Eph. iv. 9.

2dly, His exaltation in general, Phil. ii. 9. Particularly,

1. He rose again from the dead, 2 Tim. ii. 8.

2. He ascended up into heaven, Luke xxiv. 51; the mystery of it, John xx. 17.

3. He sat down at the right hand of God, Mark xvi. 19.

4. He sent the Spirit, Acts ii. 23.

5. He will come again in glory at the last day, Matth. xxvi. 64.

Repetition sermon, from 1 Cor. xv. 2. By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I have preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

VIII. Concerning the Application of the Redemption.

I. The application of it to the world in the common call.

1. It was ordered to be published, Luke xxiv. 47.
2. It was published accordingly, Mark xvi. 20.
3. Much opposition was given against it, 1 Thess. ii. 2.
4. Yet it had wonderful success, Acts xix. 20.
5. The effects of it are to be continued to the end of the world, John xv. 16.

II. The application of it to particular souls.

1. It is necessary that it be particularly applied, Col. i.
2. There are many to whom it is not particularly applied, Acts viii. 21.
3. There is a remnant to whom it is applied, Heb. iii. 14.
 - (1) The author of the application is the blessed Spirit.
 1. He is sent for this purpose, John xvi. 14.
 2. He is given to all true Christians, 1 John iv. 13.
 3. He doth his work freely and powerfully, but secretly, John iii. 8.
 4. We ought to pray for the Spirit, Luke xi. 13.
 5. We must take heed of quenching the Spirit.
 - (2) The means of application.
 1. By the promises on God's part, 2 Pet. i. 4.
 2. By faith on our part, Rom. x. 4.
 - (3) The method of application, by effectual calling.
 1. The soul in effectual calling is convinced of sin, Rom. vii. 9.
 2. Brought to be concerned about its state, Acts ii. 32.
 3. The mind is enlightened with the knowledge of Christ, 2 Cor. iv. 6.
 4. The will is renewed, Ezek. xxxvi. 26.
 5. It is persuaded to embrace Christ, John vi. 45.
 6. It is enabled to embrace Christ, Jer. xxxi. 18.
 - (4) The result of it is union with Christ, 1 Cor. i. 9.
 1. Like the union between soul and body, Gal. ii. 20.
 2. Like that between head and members, Eph. iv. 15.
 3. Like that between the root and the branches, Rom. xi. 17, 18.

4. Like that between the foundation and the building, 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5.
5. Like that between the husband and wife, Rom. iv. 7.

IX. Concerning the Divine Law.

- I. That God is the law-maker, James iv. 12.
- II. That we are obliged to submit to his laws, Job xxii. 22.
- III. That God has given to all the law of nature, Rom. ii. 14, 15.
- IV. Besides the law of nature, we have a written law, Hof. viii. 12.
- V. The excellent properties of the divine law, Rom. vii. 14; its characters, Psal. xix.
- VI. The use and end of the law.
 1. To discover sin, Rom. iii. 20.
 2. To lead to Christ, Gal. iii. 24.
- VII. The obligations which Christians are under to the law, Rom. iii. 31.
- VIII. The summary of the law, love to God, Matth. xxii. 37. Love to our neighbour, Matth. xxii. 39.
- IX. The giving of the law to Israel.
 1. The Mediator by whom it was given, John i. 17.
 2. The manner of giving the law, Deut. xxxiii. 2.
 3. The method of preserving the law, Deut. x. 4.
 The ten commandments, the preface, Exod. xx. 2.
 The first commandment, Exod. xx. 3.
 - (1) The things required.
 1. To acquaint ourselves with God, 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.
 2. To avouch him for our God, Deut. xxvi. 17.
 3. To adore him, and stand in awe of him, Isa. viii. 13.
 4. To live a life of communion with him, Psal. xxv. 15.
 5. To live a life of confidence in God, Psal. lxii. 8.
 6. To live a life of conformity to God, Eph. v. 1.
 - (2) The things forbidden are,
 1. Practical Atheism, Psal. xiv. 1.
 2. Impiety and irreligion, Rom. i. 20, 21.
 3. Spiritual idolatry, Ezek. xiv. 3. that is,

1st, Covetousness, Col. iii. 5.

2dly, Sensuality, Phil. iii. 19.

(3) The reasons of the first commandment, Exod. x. 3.

The second commandment, Exod. xx. 4, 5.

(1) The things required,

1. That we worship God, Rev. xiv. 7.

2. That we worship him in the way that he has appointed, Matth. xxviii. 20.

3. In the spirit, Phil. iii. 3.

(2) The things forbidden.

1. Making images for religious use, Deut. iv. 15, 16.

2. Joining in idolatrous worship, Dan. iii. 18.

(3) Reasons of the second commandment, Exod. xx. 5.

The third commandment, Exod. xx. 7.

(1) The things required.

1. A reverence of God's ordinances, Lev. x. 3.

2. A reverence of his providence, Job i. 21.

3. A reverence of our own engagements to him, Psal. lxxvi. 11.

(2) The things forbidden.

1. An hypocritical profession of religion, Isa. xlviii. 1.

2. A scandalous contradiction to our profession, 2 Sam. xii. 14.

3. Profanation of the ordinance of swearing, Matth. v. 33, &c.

4. The profanation of other holy things, Lev. xii. 15.

(3) The reasons, Exod. xx. 7.

The fourth commandment, Exod. xx. 8.

(1) The things required,

1. The sabbath rest, Exod. xx. 9, 10.

2. The sabbath work, Psal. xcii. 1.

(2) The reasons, Exod. xx. 11.

The fifth commandment, Exod. xx. 12. requires the duty,

1. Of children, Exod. xx. 12.

2. Of parents, Eph. vi. 4.

3. Of servants, Tit. ii. 9, 10.

4. Of masters, Col. iv. 1.

5. Of husbands and wives, Eph. v. 33.

6. Of equals, 1 Pet. ii. 17.

7. Of magistrates and subjects, Rom. xiii. 5, 6.

8. Of ministers and people, 1 Thess. v. 12, 13.

Reasons of this commandment, Exod. xx. 12.

The sixth commandment, Exod. xx. 13.

Forbids murder, even heart and tongue murder.

Requires mercifulness, Luke vi. 36.

The seventh commandment, Exod. xx. 14.

Forbids adultery, even in the heart.

Requires to keep under the body, 1 Cor. ix. 27.

The eighth commandment, Exod. xx. 15.

Requires, (1) As to our own estates,

1. Diligence, Prov. xxvii. 23.

2. Honouring God with them, Prov. iii. 9, 10.

(2) As to the estates of others.

1. Justice, Deut. xvi. 20.

2. Charity, Eph. iv. 28.

The ninth commandment, Exod. xx. 16. requires,

1. That we speak truth, Eph. iv. 25.

2. That we have an aversion to falsehood, Psal. cxix. 163.

3. That we take care of the good names of others, John
iii. 12.

4. That we take care of our own good name, 2 Cor. viii.
21.

The tenth commandment, Exod. xx. 17.

Requires, (1) A full contentment with our own condition,
Psal. iv. 10.

(2) A right and charitable frame of spirit towards all men,
1 Cor. x. 24. Forbids,

1. All discontentment with our own estate, Jude 16.

2. Envy and grieving at the good of our neighbour,
Gal. v. 26.

3. All inordinate motions and affections, Rom. vii. 7.

X. Concerning the Gospel-rule of Faith and Repentance.

In general, Mark i. 15. The kingdom of God is at hand;
repent ye, and believe the gospel.

I. Concerning repentance.

1. As it is God's gift, Acts xi. 18. God hath granted re-
pentance unto life.

2. As it is man's duty, Acts xvii. 30. Commandeth all
men every where to repent.

I. Ingredients in repentance.

- i. A sight and sense of sin, Psal. li. 2.
2. An apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, Matth.
- iii. 2.
3. Grief for sin, 2 Cor. vii. 9.
4. Shame for sin, Ezra ix. 6.
5. Hatred of sin, and self-loathing because of it, Ezek. vi.
- 9.
6. Confession of sin, Jer. iii. 13.
7. Aggravation of sin, Ezra ix. 6.
8. Self-judging, 1 Cor. xi. 31.
9. Conversion to God, Acts xxvi. 20.
10. Prayer, Acts viii. 22.
11. Living a life of repentance, Matth. iii. 8.
- II. Fruits meet for repentance.
1. Forsaking sin, particularly our own iniquity, 1 Sam.
- vii. 3.
2. Mortifying sin, Gal. v. 24.
3. Avoiding all approaches to sin, Matth. xxvi. 41.
4. Watching against all appearances of sin, 1 Thess. v. 22.
5. Making conscience of our duty, Isa. i. 16, 17.
6. Making restitution to those we have wronged, Luke
- xix. 8.
7. Loving God and Christ much, Luke vii. 38.
8. Submission to the will of God, Isa. xxxix. 8.
9. Teaching others, Psal. li. 13.
10. Humility, and admiring free grace, 1 Cor. xv. 9 ;
- and meekness towards others, Tit. iii. 2, 3.
- III. Motives to repentance.
1. It is a sure way to pardon, Acts iii. 19.
2. It is the only way to prevent ruin, Luke xiii. 5.
- The conclusion of the doctrine of repentance, from Matth.
- xi. 20. Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of
- his mighty works were done, because they repented not.
- II. Concerning faith.
- (1) As God's gift, Eph. ii. 8. And that not of yourselves,
- it is the gift of God.
- (2) As our duty ; including,
- [1] Faith in God and in all divine revelation, 2 Chron.
- xx. 20.
- [2] Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the duty of
- all those that believe in God, John xiv. 1. and the condi-
- tion of our salvation, Acts xvi. 31.

To believe in Christ, is, in scripture language,

1. To look unto him, John xix. 37.
2. To come unto him, John vi. 35.
3. To receive him, John i. 12.
4. To rest on him, Matth. xii. 21.
5. To obey him, Heb. v. 9.
6. To glory in him, Isa. xlv. 25.
- [3] Faith in things unseen, 2 Cor. iv. 18.
- (3) The fruits of faith.
 1. We live by faith, Heb. x. 38.
 2. The heart is purified by faith, Acts xv. 9.
 3. It works by love, Gal. v. 6.
 4. It overcomes the world, 1 John iv. 5.
 5. It defeats Satan's temptations, Eph. vi. 16.
 6. It is that by which the Christian stands, 2 Cor. i. 24.
 7. It is our support under affliction, Psal. xxvii. 13.
 8. By faith we rejoice always, 1 Pet. i. 8.
 9. It is of great use in prayer, James i. 6.
 10. Out of the abundance of faith in the heart the mouth speaks, 2 Cor. iv. 13.
 11. It will have an universal influence upon us, 2 Cor. v. 7.
- The conclusion of the sermons about faith, from Acts xxviii. 24. And some believed the things that were spoken, and some believed not.

XI. Concerning Gospel-ordinances.

This subject he had largely handled in the years 1694 and 1695; and therefore now spoke but briefly to it, in ten sermons, insisting chiefly upon prayer, and explaining the Lord's prayer, Matth. vi. 9.

XII. Concerning the Church.

1. That God has a church in the world, Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20.

2. That it is one family denominated from Christ, Eph. iii. 15.
3. It is a city, and we profess to be citizens of it, Gal. iv. 6.
4. It is one, John x. 16.
5. It is still growing, Acts ii. 47.
6. It is safe, Matth. xvi. 18.
7. The militant church will shortly be triumphant, Eph. v. 27. We should pray for it, and always seek its good, Psal. cxxii. 8, 9.

XIII. Concerning the Four Last Things.

In general, from Rev. iv. 1. Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. Particularly,

(1) Of death.

1. The necessity and certainty of it, 2 Sam. xiv. 14.
2. The different disposal of the soul and body at death, Eccles. xii. 6, 7.
3. The different state of the godly and wicked at death. It is terrible to the wicked, Job xviii. 14. It is happy to the righteous, Rev. xiv. 13. Be therefore ready to die, Luke xii. 40.

(2) Of the judgment-day, 2 Pet. iii. 10.

1. The Lord Jesus Christ shall then appear in his glory, Rev. xxii. 20.
2. The dead shall be raised, and the living changed, 1 Cor. xv. 25.

3. The world shall be destroyed, 2 Pet. iii. 10.

4. We must all be judged, 2 Cor. v. 10.

(3) Of the torments of hell.

The sentence passed on the wicked shall be executed, Matth. xxv. 41. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, 2 Cor. v. 11.

(4) Of the happiness of heaven.

1. There is an eternal life, 1 John v. 11.
2. The bodies of the saints shall be glorious, Phil. iii. 21.
3. They shall be openly and publicly owned, Matth. iii. 17.

4. They shall be called to inherit the kingdom, Matth. xxv. 24.

5. They shall be perfect in knowledge, 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

6. They shall be perfect in holiness, Rev. xxii. 11.

7. They shall be perfect in joy, Psal. xvi. last.

8. They shall be perfect in glory, 2 Cor. iv. 7.

The conclusion, from 1 Theff. iv. 18. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

This is a general scheme of Mr. Henry's Lord's days sermons at Chester; but it must be remembered, that while he was pursuing this method, abundance of occasional discourses were mixed with it; for though he rightly judged a method of preaching tends to make the most solid and judicious hearers, yet he was careful to improve every providential event, by bringing it to the written word, that all might hear what God the Lord spoke to them on that occasion.

We are next to take a view of the method of subjects he went through on sacramental occasions, for fourteen years together, that is, from 1696 to 1710; for as for the rest of the time, it does not appear that he confined himself to any such scheme: but, even when he left himself at liberty, he always chose his subjects with great propriety.

The general heads of his sacramental sermons for the time mentioned are,

1. The end of Christ's death.

2. The trial of our spiritual state.

3. Penitent reflections and pious resolutions.

4. The promises. And let us take a short view of his manner of treating on these heads.

(1) The ends of Christ's death, having before largely set forth the sufferings of Christ. The introduction from Luke xxiv. 46. Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day.

1. To glorify God, John xii. 27, 28. Father, glorify thy name, &c.

2. To satisfy for sin, Heb. ix. 28. Once offered to bear the sins of many.

3. To bring us to God, 1 Pet. iii. 18.

4. That we should live together with him, 1 Theff. v. 10.

5. To conquer and subdue our spiritual enemies, Col. ii.

15.

6. To make peace between God and us, Col. ii. 30.

- 7. To gather in one the children of God, John xi. 52.
- 8. To sanctify the church, Eph. v. 25, 26.
- 9. To purchase heaven for us, Heb. ix. 15.
- 10. To set us an example, 1 Pet. ii. 21.

The conclusion, from Gal. vi. 14. But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

This he followed with a set of practical discourses, as inferences from the sufferings and death of Christ.

- 1. Look upon him and mourn, Zech. xii. 10.
- 2. Celebrate the Redeemer's praises, Rev. v. 9, 12.
- 3. Admire redeeming love, Rom. v. 8.
- 4. Mortify all sin, Rom. vi. 12.
- 5. Live to him that died for you, 2 Cor. v. 15.
- 6. Go forth unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach, Heb. xiii. 13.
- 7. Love one another, 1 John iv. 11.
- 8. Learn to be humble, Matth. xx. 27, 28.
- 9. Die to the world, John xvii. 16.
- 10. Arm yourselves with the same mind, 1 Pet. iv. 1.
- 11. Be comforted in Christ, Rom. viii. 32.
- 12. Stand in awe of the justice of God, Luke xxiii. 31.
- 13. Be encouraged in prayer, Heb. x. 19, 20.
- 14. Be very tender of the souls of men, Rom. xiv. 15.
- 15. Be willing to lay down your lives for the brethren, 1 John iii. 16.
- 16. Be ready to die, John xi. 16.

The conclusion from these inferences, from 1 Cor. i. 18. The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God.

(2) The next set of sermons on sacramental occasions, was for the trial of our spiritual state, in Scripture marks of hypocrisy and sincerity.

In general from 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves: know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

1st mark of hypocrisy; Not to have the Spirit of Christ, Rom. viii. 9.

Evidence of sincerity; Brokenness of heart for sin, Psal. li. 17.

2d mark of hypocrisy; Minding only the outside, Matth. xxiii. 28.

Evidence of sincerity; Esteem of God's favour, Psal. iv. 6, 7.

3d mark of hypocrisy; A heart estranged from God, Matth. xv. 8.

Evidence of sincerity; Accepting Christ on his own terms, John xx. 28.

4th mark of hypocrisy; Living in sin, 1 John i. 6.

Evidence of sincerity; Respect to all God's commands, Psal. cxix. 6.

5th mark of hypocrisy; Pride, Matth. xxiii. 12.

Evidence of sincerity; Keeping from our own iniquity, 2 Sam. xxii. 24.

6th mark of hypocrisy; Indulging the flesh, Rom. viii. 5.

Evidence of sincerity; Minding the Spirit, Rom. viii. 5.

7th mark of hypocrisy; Love to the world, 1 John ii. 15.

Evidence of sincerity; Love to Christ, John xxi. 17.

8th mark of hypocrisy; Uncharitableness, 1 John iii. 17.

Evidence of sincerity; Love to the brethren, 1 John iii.

14.

9th mark of hypocrisy; Not doing righteousness, 1 John iii. 10.

Evidence of sincerity; Fearing always, Prov. xxviii. 14.

10th mark of hypocrisy; An unbridled tongue, James i. 26.

Evidence of sincerity; Growth in grace, Job xvii. 9.

11th mark of hypocrisy; Partiality, Matth. ii.

Evidence of sincerity; Continuing in Christ's word, John viii. 31.

12th mark of hypocrisy; Apostacy, Luke viii. 13.

Evidence of sincerity; Submission to the will of God, 2 Sam. xv. 26.

To these were subjoined some discourses concerning mistakes about the spiritual state; cautioning against the presuming hopes of the hypocrite, and comforting against the disquieting fears of true Christians.

An introductory discourse from Prov. xiii. 7. There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; and there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches.

1st Caution, against the presuming hopes of hypocrites, Matth. iii. 9, 10, 12. Think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father. Now the axe is laid to the root of the tree. His fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor.

Comfort against disquieting fears of true Christians; against distance, from Isa. lvi. 3. Neither let the son of the stranger that hath joined himself to the Lord speak, saying, the Lord hath separated me from his people.

2d Caution, Luke xiii. 26. Then shall ye begin to say, we have eaten and drank in thy presence.

Comfort against guilt, Psal. xl. 12. Mine iniquities have taken hold on me, that I am not able to look up.

3d Caution, Luke xviii. 11. God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

Comfort against indwelling corruption, Rom. vii. 24, 25. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ my Lord.

4th Caution, not to trust to prosperity, Psal. xii. 8. The vilest men are exalted.

Comfort against rash conclusions, from Psal. xxxi. 22. I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes; nevertheless, thou heardest the voice of my supplications.

The conclusion, from Isa. xl. 4. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low.

(3) The next set was of penitent reflections and pious resolutions, the one set over against the other.

The introduction, from Psal. cxii. 59. I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.

1. Penitent reflections; I have sinned, Psal. xli. 4.

Pious resolutions; I will do so no more, Job xxxiv. 32.

2. I have done foolishly, 2 Sam. ii. 10.

I will behave myself wisely, Psal. ci. 2.

3. I have perverted that which is right, Job xxxiii. 27.

I will never forget thy precepts, Psal. cxix. 93.

4. Against thee, thee only, &c. Psal. liv. 4.

We will walk in the name of the Lord, Mic. iv. 5.

5. A man of unclean lips, Isa. vi. 9.

My mouth shall not transgress, Psal. xvii. 3.

6. I have gone astray, Psal. cxix. 176.

I will run the ways, &c. Psal. cxix. 32.

7. Neither have we obeyed, Dan. ix. 10.

We will obey, Jer. xlii. 6.

8. I have been as a bullock, Jer. xxxi. 18.

I will bear the indignation, Mic. vii. 9.

9. The reproach of my youth, Jer. xxxi. 19.
 None of these things move me, Acts xx. 24.
 10. The good which I would do, Rom. vii. 19.
 What I do, that I will do, 2 Cor. xi. 12.
 11. This is my infirmity, Psal. lxxvii. 10.
 Though he slay me, I will trust, Job xiii. 5.

The use of the penitent reflections, from 1 John i. 9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. He that confesseth and forsaketh shall find mercy.

The use of the pious resolutions, from Psal. cxix. 106. I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments, Psal. cxix. 115, 116. I will keep the commandments of my God. Uphold me according unto thy word.

(4) The last set of sacramental discourses was upon the promises; this was begun in October 1706, and finished in May 1710.

A general introduction, from 2 Cor. i. 20. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us.

1. Exod. xix. 5. Ye shall be unto me a peculiar treasure above all people, for all the earth is mine.

2. Isa. xliii. 25. I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.

3. Rom. vi. 14. Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

4. Ezek. xxxvi. 27. I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

5. Deut. xxx. 6. The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart.

6. John viii. 32. Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

7. Jer. xxxii. 39. And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever.

8. Isa. xl. 11. He shall gather the lambs in his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

9. Psal. xxv. 8, 9. He will teach sinners the way; the

meek will he guide in judgment. the meek will he teach his ways.

10. Psal. cxxi. 7, 8. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul; the Lord shall preserve thy going out and coming in.

11. Psal. xxxiv. 10. The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.

12. John xiv. 15. Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

13. Isa. xli. 13. For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not, I will help thee.

14. Deut. xxxiii. 27. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee.

15. Isa. xxxii. 17. The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.

16. Psal. lxxv. 4. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.

17. Psal. xxv. 13. His soul shall dwell at ease, and his seed shall inherit the earth.

18. Psal. xci. 14, 15. I will deliver him, I will set him on high. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, and deliver him, and honour him.

19. 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15. I will be his Father, and he shall be my son; if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men:---but my mercy shall not depart from him.

20. Mal. iii. 17. They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

21. Isa. lvii. 16. I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth; for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made.

22. Psal. lxxxv. 8. I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace to his people, and to his saints.

23. 1 Cor. x. 13. God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape.

24. 1 Sam. ii. 30. Them that honour me, I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.

25. Psal. xxxvii. 3. Trust in the Lord, and do good: so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

26. Psal. xxxvii. 6. He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day.

27. Psal. xli. 3. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing; thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.

28. Jer. xxxii. 40. I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

29. Rom. viii. 28. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

30. Phil. i. 6. He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

31. Isa. xli. 4. Even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you.

32. Heb. xiii. 5. Be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

33. Rom. xvi. 20. And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.

34. Prov. xix. 17. He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given, he will pay him again.

35. Matth. xix. 29. Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters---for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold.

36. Psal. xci. 16. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

37. Psal. xxiii. 4. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me.

38. Psal. xlix. 15. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave; for he shall receive me.

39. Ps. cii. 28. The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.

40. John vi. 40. Every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

41. Matth. x. 42. Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

42. 1 John ii. 25. And this is the promise which he hath promised us, even eternal life.

The conclusion of the subject of the promises, from 2 Cor. vii. 1. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord.

Thus far we have an account of the method of preaching which Mr. Henry generally observed on sabbath-days, and on sacrament-days; it remains, that we take a view of his labours on the week-day lectures.

And he begun this part of his work with occasional texts, for short time, and then preached a set of sermons about the shortness of time, and the transitory nature of all earthly things, from 1 Cor. vii. 29--31. But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none, and they that weep as though they wept not, &c.

Then he proceeded to preach on the great grace and duty of charity, going over 1 Cor. xiii. and having done with that, he began with the 11th of the Hebrews, and preached it over in about 140 sermons, in the compass of a little more than a year and a half; and then preached the 14th chapter of Hosea in less than a year's time.

And then it was that he began an unusual course of lectures, all upon scripture questions. The first sermon of this kind was preached Oct. 1. 1692, from Gen. iii. 9. "The Lord called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?" setting forth, in a very pathetic manner, the woe-ful change that sin hath made upon the first man and all his posterity.

In his diary on that day, he notes it down, "I have now begun upon scripture questions, in the strength of the Lord my God. It seems a method somewhat singular, but I can truly say, I affect not singularity; my desire is to please and profit."

And doubtless in this he had his desire. His hearers were pleased with it to their edification. As far as I can conjecture, he was led into this uncommon path by such considerations as these:

1. Here he expected both pleasure and advantage in looking into every part of the Bible, and leading his hearers into a more thorough acquaintance with it; for these questions ly-

ing every where interspersed through the Old and New Testament, and bearing reference to the several cases on which they were proposed, they must needs take in a very considerable part, both of the history and doctrine of the Bible.

2. There is generally something pungent and emphatical in what is put by way of question. It is a pointed way of speaking, that strikes the mind more directly. There is in it an immediate application and appeal to one's reason and conscience. It supposes the case so plain, as that, as soon as it is proposed, a man's reason must give into it; or so important, that conscience must presently take cognisance of it; or in some cases so very bad, that a man cannot hear of it without remorse: it is the nearest way of access to conscience.

3. This way of instructing by questions, like that by parables, while it discovers the mind of the speaker, employs, and so improves the mind of the hearer. It engages attention, sets men a thinking, will not suffer them to be mere passive recipients of another man's thoughts, but makes them actively contribute to their own information. It gives them a key and clue, and leaves them to pursue the hint till they arrive at the bottom of it, and reap the benefit designed them in it.

And, to say no more, the variety of things and thoughts that this method must lead to, could not but render it very acceptable and useful too, especially considering these questions are matters of divine record, and all of a spiritual nature, either directly or by deduction, or at least by a proper analogy. They are part of that scripture that was given by inspiration of God, "and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness, able to make the man of God perfect, and every man wise to salvation."

This method of lectures was not finished till May 9. 1712; only he mingled some other subjects with it, as that remarkable passage concerning Martha and Mary, and that about God's opening the heart of Lydia; but then he soon returned to the questions. And when he had gone through an hundred out of the Old Testament, which ended with Ruth, he went on to the New Testament; and when he had dispatched sixty questions there, returned to the Old Testament: and at length, just before he left Chester, finished all with the last question in the Bible, Rev. xviii. 18. "What city is like unto this great city?"—The above subject held him near twenty years on lecture-days.

Another part of his constant work among his people was that of catechising. In this also he took great pleasure, being full of affection and compassion for the souls of young people. Christ's charge to Peter, to feed the lambs as well as the sheep, he had much at heart, and it was often in his mouth. He knew by experience the benefit of this Christian institution; his good father both abounded and excelled in it, as well in his family as in the congregation.

Saturday, in the afternoon, was the time set apart for this work, beginning and ending with prayer, in which his expressions were very plain and very tender, suited to the nature of the ordinance, and to the capacity of young persons. In this exercise he usually spent about an hour. It was attended by others besides the catechumens, and esteemed by them a good means of preparation for the Lord's day.

He made use of the Assembly's Catechism, dividing the answers into several lesser propositions, explaining them, and supporting them by suitable texts of scripture, and then drawing practical inferences. In the explication and inferences on each head, he chose generally to content himself with the dicotomy or distribution into two branches, which (whether it be, as some will have it, the most proper and specific distinction) he found to be best for the memory of young persons. I need to say little more about his management of this work, he having published a very useful exposition of the Catechism, which is in many hands, and to which he very much conformed himself in this exercise, though not without some agreeable variation.

He also drew up a shorter and plainer catechism for children very young. This was done at the desire of his highly esteemed friend and brother Mr. Chorlton of Manchester, one whose judgment weighed very much with him, and for whom he had an entire affection. Mr. Chorlton was indeed an extraordinary man for a strong and clear judgment, a free and noble elocution, great acquirements in every useful sort of learning, of an upright spirit, and of a most generous temper. Two men so much alike in natural and moral respects, and so often meeting together, could not but fall into the strictest and most endearing friendship.

Mr. Chorlton thought that even the Shorter Catechism of the Assembly was too long for children, and some parts of it too abstruse, and quite above their capacity; and he had a just opinion, that no one better knew how to accommodate

himself to the meanest capacity than Mr. Henry ; and therefore pressed him to publish something of that nature, which might at least be very proper to be used in families, whether it were brought into the public congregation or no. It was an easy thing to set Mr. Henry to work about any thing that might be of spiritual advantage ; and accordingly he published a plain catechism for children, which is very well fitted to answer the proposed end.

To this he added another for the instruction of those that are to be admitted to the Lord's Supper, according to the method used by his father, of which an account has been given in his life. This was chiefly designed for those that were admitted, when young, to the Lord's table, and is a plain and proper explication of that sacred ordinance, in the nature and ends of it, and may be of good use to those that are advanced in years and knowledge.

In this work of catechising he was remarkably owned and blessed of God. He longed for the conversion of young people, and had the desire of his soul, in seeing the good work begun in many of his catechumens. Of these he always speaks with a particular respect ; and when any of whom he had entertained good hopes grew loose and vain, (and, notwithstanding all his care and pains, there were some such) he sadly lamented their sin, and his disappointment in them, and ceased not to pray earnestly to God for them, " That he would recover them out of the snare of the devil, before their hearts were hardened with the deceitfulness of sin."

In this part of his work he persevered to the last. His catechetical lecture in London, at the meeting-house formerly belonging to his honoured tutor Mr. Doolittle, was a means of the more general reviving that exercise in and about the city, though it had never been wholly omitted before. That lecture was well attended, exceeding well managed, and had visible success. I know some young persons, who were only there as hearers, date the first serious impressions they felt in their souls about religion from the opportunities they there enjoyed.

In the administration of the Lord's Supper, another part of his stated work, I have not known any more constant or more enlarged than Mr. Henry. His soul was formed for this ordinance. He was full of love to Christ, and thankfulness to God for Christ ; and he often records in his diary,

what soul-affecting views he had at such and such a time, of the sufferings and glory of Christ; and if at any time it was otherwise with him, he greatly lamented it as his sin and loss.

In his method of subjects already given, you will find what were the doctrines and duties of the gospel he used most to insist upon on these occasions. He was very much taken up in opening the covenant of grace, pressing all that heard him to come into it, and having done so, to renew it frequently at the Lord's table. This was his own practice, and he knew what he said when he recommended the advantages of it to others. The lecture-days before the sacrament he preached on subjects suitable to the occasion; and, among many others, went over the addresses made to Christ on earth; as, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean," &c. then Christ's answers to them; as, "I will, be thou clean," &c.

The first Lord's day in every month was observed by him and his congregation as a sacred festival; for he was ready enough to conform himself to the custom of other churches, where he could do it with a good conscience; and this was a custom which he thought not barely lawful, but expedient. He observed, that with the Jews, the beginnings of their months were holy; and though he did not suppose the Jewish law about the new moons to be still in force, yet he thought one might safely conclude, from the general reason of the case, that whatever divisions of time we have among us, it is good always to begin with God, "seeking first his kingdom, and the righteousness thereof."

He much approved of his father's judgment and practice, in encouraging young persons to come and renew their baptismal covenant at the Lord's table. His father used to admit young people out of the rank of catechumens into that of communicants, in a very solemn manner. Where he observed any of them to be intelligent and serious, he marked them out for the Lord's supper; and when he had a competent number of such, he ordered each of them to come to him severally. He discoursed with them about the state of their souls; he put it closely to their choice whom they would serve, and endeavoured to affect them with the great doctrines of the gospel in which they had been instructed, drawing them with the cords of a man and the bonds of love. For several Lord's days he catechised them publicly,

concerning the Lord's supper, the duty of preparation for it, and the nature of the baptismal covenant, which at the Lord's table they were to take upon themselves, making it their own act and deed; then appointed a day in the week before the ordinance, in which in the public assembly he prayed earnestly for them, and preached a sermon to them, proper to their age and circumstances; and so the following sabbath they were all received together to the Lord's table. This he judged to be the right way of confirmation or transition into a state of adult and complete church-membership.

His son observed this method in all the material parts of it; and accordingly, as I have before mentioned, he composed a catechism for this purpose, and many young persons were brought into the bond of the covenant by the blessing of God upon his endeavours; and many of them answered his desires and hopes, though he had not equal comfort in them all.

In the ordinance of the Lord's supper he even excelled himself; all the parts of the administration were performed with great life and fervour, and yet with good judgment and propriety: he had generally something new on that occasion, out of the great treasure of divine knowledge that God had enabled him to lay up in his heart. A great variety of scriptures were opened, both in the introduction to the ordinance, and in the subsequent exhortation, and all with weight and seriousness. His heart on these occasions was enlarged to a wonder, and all the powers of his soul engaged; and though in his retirements he would complain sometimes of dulness and barrenness in this work, it seldom or never appeared to others; and I think he had as little reason to complain of it in himself as most men living. But where there are such ardent breathings after sinless perfection, every defect will be sensibly felt and lamented.

I appeal to his Chester friends whether I have gone beyond due bounds in this part of his character. He makes mention of his Chester sacraments with a particular accent, even when he was removed from them. His long continuance and intimate acquaintance with them, may well be supposed to have given him that great freedom and enlargement of spirit with them in that ordinance, which he could not immediately fall into with another people, though they also thought he did truly excel.

I hope his Chester friends will always retain the same sense he had in his own soul, of those sweet opportunities they have enjoyed together at the table of the Lord, how often it was to them as the mount of transfiguration, where they saw the King in his beauty, and beheld the land that was afar off; what chearful feasts they kept, and how they had in their solemn assembly an emblem of heaven. As this was never forgotten by him, I hope it will be remembered by them the longest day they have to live.

In the other sacrament, that of baptism, he was not less faithful or serious. It was always his desire to have that ordinance administered in public, and would seldom take a denial, unless there was something extraordinary to determine the case. He had an excellent way of clearing up the scripture authority of infant baptism, and explaining the nature and advantages of it, and was well pleased with his father's familiar way of illustrating it by the instance of the landlord's putting the infant's life into the lease with the parents; but he was far from substituting similitudes in the room of arguments. He lived in great friendship and affection with those good people that were otherwise minded: indeed he had as little of the spirit of a sect as any man living, but yet he always declared his great regard to infant baptism, as one of the great privileges as well as duties of Christian families.

He baptised many at years of discretion that had not been taken into the bond of the covenant in their infancy, and was glad when he could prevail with them to have the ordinance administered publicly, and then he was most copious and lively in pressing upon all the practical improvement of their baptism.

His thoughts about this part of the worship of God he has, with great judgment, digested, in an excellent treatise upon the subject, which well deserves well to be made public, and I hope will be in a little time: the doctrinal, historical, and practical part of the ordinance, are stated and discussed with great perspicuity, seriousness, and spirituality.

Among his constant labours we may reckon the congregational fasts, which he observed quarterly, with great strictness and solemnity. On these occasions, the state of the nation and of the church of God throughout the world were never forgotten; but the principal design was to recommend to God the state of that congregation, lamenting their unprofitableness, and whatever sinful failings and matters of offence any

had been guilty of among them, earnestly imploring pardon and favour from God, and the continuance of his presence with them, and the more plentiful effusion of his Holy Spirit upon them; and on these occasions they did not fail to seek the peace and prosperity of that city, and the inhabitants of it; and though too many of them derided their devotions, I do believe the whole city has fared the better for them.

Having thus observed this faithful servant of Christ in his constant labours among his own people, we now follow him into those that were more accidental and occasional; for he omitted no occasion that the providence of God put into his hands of doing good, and often sought occasions, which few besides would have thought themselves obliged to observe.

His occasional labours were either public or private.

Those of a public nature he always managed with great care and diligence; such were the national fasts, and days of thanksgiving appointed by public authority.

He had not lived much more than a year in Chester, when it pleased God to send over our deliverer King William. In this great deliverance from Popery and slavery, Mr. Henry truly rejoiced, and yet not without trembling. He saw even then the nation wanted a due sense of what God had done for them, and easily foresaw, that though they sung his praises, many of them would soon forget his works, his wonders at the sea, the Red Sea: he rightly judged, that the after-pangs were like to be sharp, and of long continuance, though the deliverance itself was very quick, and a nation as it were born in a day: such apprehensions he had in his own mind, and could not conceal them from his particular friends.

The divisions that soon broke out in the two houses of parliament about the settlement of the crown; the discontents that early appeared in those that were secret enemies, or at least no fast friends to the Revolution; the ill state of things in Scotland, by reason of the Earl of Dundee's insurrection; the deplorable condition of Ireland, which was in a manner wholly in the hands of the Irish Papists; these things lay heavy on the minds of the faithful in the land, and caused in them great thoughts, and great searchings of heart.

These violent strugglings of different parties in our land, and the war in which we were soon engaged with France, (who by secret leagues stood obliged to assist and support king James in rooting out that which they called the Northern Heresy, and that civil liberty that must always stand or fall

with it) these things convinced our rulers how necessary it was to appoint days of public humiliation, fasting, and prayer, to be strictly observed throughout the land: Mr. Henry came into this with all his heart and strength; he made it a matter of conscience to keep those days to the Lord, as fasts that the Lord had chosen, and would accept.

In the year 1691, a monthly fast was appointed to be observed every third Wednesday in the month, and it was observed by Mr. Henry and his congregation with great strictness. He would sometimes stand alone for five hours in the work of the day, and continued to the last with life and affection. Those were days in which they wrestled with God. He had the holy art of spiritual pleadings; he filled his mouth with scripture arguments, and the deep sense he had of the state of the public, and concern for the ark of God, furnished him with suitable affections: he offered up strong cries and supplications, with many tears, (in imitation of Christ), to him that was able to deliver, and was heard in that he feared.

The first sermon of his that I can find on this occasion was on the 29th of April the same year, from Zech. vii. 8. "Did ye at all fast unto me, even to me?" He always used on those days to expound some portion of scripture suitable to the occasion; this sermon was designed for caution and direction in the way of sanctifying a fast. The next fast-sermon was for encouragement, from Rev. vi. 2. "I saw, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went forth conquering, and to conquer;" setting forth the power and victory of the Lord Jesus Christ, obliging all his people to humble themselves before him, and encouraging them in faith to pray unto him.

The next was from Isa. x. 12. "Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Sion, and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks." The monthly fast was continued that year to October, and then superseded.

The next year, 1692, the public fasts were revived, and ordered to be kept the second Wednesday in the month, the first to be on the 8th of April; then Mr. Henry gladly returned to that necessary duty, and opened the fast with an excellent discourse concerning the mighty influence that

prayer hath upon the affairs of churches and kingdoms, from Exod. xvii. 11. "And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed." These fasts continued seven months that year, in which Mr. Henry was never absent from his place and work.

The year after, these monthly fasts were not revived till May, and I find him sadly lamenting that those days began to be less strictly observed, and the people generally grew weary of them; he guarded against this sinful declension in his congregation, and there his preaching was well attended to the end of the season; he concluding with a discourse from Jer. viii. 20. "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

For some years after this, these days came but seldom, once, or at most twice a year. The 26th of June 1696 was appointed for a public fast, the only one that year, and then it was that Mr. Henry was prevented from keeping it at Chester, by reason of the death of his excellent father; on which occasion he has made this remark in his diary:

"This day is appointed a public fast; my place is now vacant, it did not use to be so, but God will have it so now. I had thought not to have done any thing at Broad Oak, and had given notice accordingly; but I see the people come in, and are greatly affected that their minister should be taken away from them just before a fast, which he had given notice of on the Lord's day, both morning and evening, and had earnestly pressed them to the due observation of it. I remember I had often heard my father say, Weeping must not hinder sowing; I therefore thought it my duty to spend two or three hours in the meeting-place, putting the people in mind, that we had kept too many fasts with dry eyes under melting ordinances, but God had caused us to keep this with wet eyes under a melting providence. I preached from 2 Kings xii. 20. 'Elisha died, and the bands of the Moabites invaded the land.' The removal of public useful instruments is a sad presage of public dreadful judgments."

Mr. Henry was not less constant and hearty in joining with the nation in days of public thanksgiving. To a person of his honest, chearful, public spirit, such work must needs be very pleasant, and in him it was very comely. He took notice, that days of humiliation were more frequent in the reign of king William, but days of thanksgiving were much

more frequent in the reign of queen Anne; we expected great things from king William's known zeal for the good of Europe, from his wisdom and conduct, his indefatigable application to the war, (in which he pressed too hard upon a constitution none of the best, till he had utterly ruined it); and we were not without some happy occasions of public rejoicing in his time, which we were willing to believe were the first-fruits of further mercy to the land.

But God had reserved the plentiful harvest of success and honour for the reign of our late sovereign queen Anne: she no sooner came to the throne, but found it necessary to renew the war against the French king and his grandson the king of Spain, and her faithful parliament resolved they would support her in it. The French king had ordered the Pretender to be proclaimed king of Great Britain, had broken the balance of Europe, by seizing on the Spanish monarchy for his grandson, and thereby put the civil and religious liberties of all the Protestants in the world into the utmost danger. These are the reasons that induced our governors to renew their alliances with the Emperor, the States-General, and other princes, to oppose the encroachment of the growing power of France, that was now become more formidable than ever, and threatened no part of Europe more immediately than our own land.

Accordingly, on the 10th of June 1702, a national fast was appointed, to implore the blessing of God upon the confederate forces, &c. that were then going into the field against those of France, who seemed at that time to outdo us in number, and had been too quick for us in opening the campaign. This day Mr. Henry kept with great solemnity, and was observed to be under an uncommon concern of soul, spending some hours in prayer, and himself preaching twice, from Jer. xiv. 7. "O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake; for our backslidings are many, and we have sinned against thee."

The very first year of this war was signalised with great successes, both by sea and land, for which a day of public thanksgiving was appointed to be kept on the 3d of December, which Mr. Henry faithfully observed, preaching on that occasion from Psal. xii. 5. "Kings of armies did flee apace, and she that tarried at home divided the spoil."

The year 1704 will for ever shine in the annals of England and Europe, for that signal and complete victory gained

by the illustrious Duke of Marlborough over the French and Bavarians at Blenheim. The first news of this, Mr. Henry observes, came to Chester on the 13th of August, which was the Lord's day; and he says it added something to the comfort of that news to him, that he had been preaching that day from John iii. 35. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands." The public thanksgiving for the glorious successes of that year, was on the 7th of September; at that time he lay very ill of a fever, but was by no means willing the work of the day should be omitted; he therefore prevailed with Mr. John Evans, then living at Wrexham, to supply his place in that good work, which he did to universal satisfaction, preaching from Judges v. 12. "Awake, awake, Deborah, utter a song; arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam." Mr. Henry mentions it as some trouble to his spirit, that on that day, when all good Protestants and Englishmen had such an opportunity of common joy, an eminent dignitary of the church, in his sermon at the Abbey, was very severe in reflecting on the Dissenters, charging them with an inexcusable frowardness; on which he writes, "Is there no peace then to be had, unless we will submit in every thing to those that say to our souls, Bow down, that we may pass over?"

At the end of the next year, in a thankful rehearsal of the mercies of the year, Mr. Henry has these words: "That which is chiefly remarkable as the mercy of this year, is the happy posture of our public affairs at home; after a mighty struggle, moderate counsels have prevailed, God has wonderfully inclined the queen's heart to such counsels, and useth her as an instrument of great good to the nation; patrons of our liberty have been strangely raised up among those that have no kindness for our way; the intemperate heats of bigots have proved to make mightily against themselves. There are many adversaries, and yet the door continues open; great endeavours are used to render us contemptible, odious, dangerous, and what not, and yet we live and go on; young ones are coming in, and some hopeful ones. O that the power of godliness, seriousness, holiness, and heavenly-mindedness may prevail more among us, and then we should have a hopeful prospect indeed! And who can tell but infinite Wisdom may yet find out a way for comprehending us, though the present temper of our neighbours rather sets it at a greater distance than ever?" Not long after, he adds, "I

hear the Dissenters meet with the smiles of the court; if it be so, I wish we may bear the smiles of the government with humility and modesty, as our fathers did its frowns with meekness and patience."

The year 1706 was crowned with the goodness of God, in that glorious victory of Ramillies, May 12. for which, and the wonderful success of our affairs in Catalonia, a day of public thanksgiving was appointed. The occasion of rejoicing being thus doubled, Mr. Henry thought our praises ought to be too, and therefore preached twice that day, from Gen. xiv. 19, 20. "Melchisedec blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be the Most High God, who hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand." In his diary he records a short petition to God, that the praises of that day might be accepted by him: and a while after he observes, that on the same day in which these public thanksgivings were offered up to God, the garrison of Ostend marched out, after the town had been beleagued by our forces for about eight or ten days.

That public day of praise to God, which was appointed in the year 1708, for the defeating of the attempted invasion, and for the victory gained near Audenard, was observed by him with his usual solemnity: he preached twice that day, from Gen. xlix. 9. That I may not be tedious, let it be sufficient to tell you, that he kept up to the same degree of diligence and fidelity, on all these occasions, which continued as long as the war itself. It is pleasant to recollect the wonderful mercies of God to us and our allies; but it is sad to think how soon they were not only forgotten, but treated with contempt: however, it is evident Mr. Henry (and the same may be truly said of the rest of the Dissenters) really sought the welfare of the nation. He was of a public spirit, and it may, without vanity or just offence, be concluded, that his fervent prayers and thanksgivings (among many others) had some share in the public successes. It has been already observed, that the event of the war between Israel and Amalek, was decided in the mount of prayer, and this mountain of prayer is truly more glorious and excellent than all the mountains of prey: there it is that God "breaks the arrows of the bow, the shield, the sword, and the battle," Psal. lxxvi. 3. And as Mr. Henry, on these occasions, prayed in faith and with great sincerity, he had the satisfac-

tion in his own soul to look upon public mercies as returns even to his prayers, though he was far from ascribing them only to his. In his diary on the 8th of July 1708, he expresses himself in these words, "This evening we have news of a complete victory gained by the Duke of Marlborough and the forces under his command in Flanders over the French, in answer to many prayers, even of poor me."

We go on now to observe his great diligence and faithfulness on private as well as public occasions, such as praying with the families of his friends, when under any particular dispensation of providence; visiting the sick; conferences; admonition, where it was needful; and especially visiting and assisting the poor prisoners and malefactors in the castle of Chester, preaching to them, and praying with them.

He was often called upon by his friends to advise them, and pray with them upon family occasions, and ever ready to serve them. He was a prudent counsellor, and his advice was much desired and valued; he was always free and open, and ready to give it, but would still put his friends in mind, "that the way of man is not in himself;" that in all our ways we ought to acknowledge God, who has promised, if we do so, he will direct our steps: he was desirous that his friends should trust more to prayer than to his advice. I have heard him say he was best pleased with those visits in which his friends put him upon praying with them; this was the sweetness of Christian conversation, and though his entertainment had been never so good, and the company agreeable, yet if they parted without prayer, he owned he could not go away with so much satisfaction. He complains in his diary, that on such a day he had been with several of his friends, and had not the opportunity of putting up one prayer for them.

It was but seldom that he had any occasion for a complaint of that nature; his Chester friends loved prayer; they had been trained up to it on all occasions. If any drew near the perilous hour, if they had any journey to take, any affair of consequence to manage, any child to put to a trade, or otherways to dispose of, it was their way to commit all to God in prayer, not only in their closets and families, but with their ministers. In this good old way he found them, and he encouraged them in it, and never declined to join with the meanest and poorest of the people on such occasions: his diary abounds with instances of this kind; it took up a

great deal of his time, but he did not grudge it them, for he knew he was in the way of his duty. In one place he makes this remark, "How sweet a thing is it to pray, minding a particular errand!"

His custom on such times was, after familiar discourse with his friends about the affairs that lay before him, and giving them the best counsel he could think of, he would turn to some portion of Scripture that was suitable to the case, and open and apply it very properly to them; and then in prayer I never knew the minister that could more fitly and fully recommend any particular concern to God than he would do, and generally in scripture expressions.

Visiting the sick he took to be an essential part of his ministry, and he was very diligent in it, never refusing to go either to rich or poor when sent for, unless hindered by invincible necessity; in this he did not confine his visits to those of his own congregation, or of his own opinion; he was often sent for to visit those in communion with the established church, and to strangers, travellers and passengers to and from Ireland, and he readily complied, and did indeed abound in this part of his work, which to many tempers has something in it very difficult and disagreeable.

He would inquire of his friends, Whether they knew of any that were sick? and when bills were put up to him, he would read them, and publicly make it his request, that those who sent them in would put their names to them, that he might be more constantly mindful of them, and might know how to be more serviceable to them. In his diary (besides all his other work) you will often find him visiting the sick every day in the week, the Lord's day not excepted, and sometimes visiting four or five sick persons in one day; and he puts down their names, with a brief account of their state and frame as to body and soul, and often records what the event was, whether life or death; and if they recovered, he seldom failed to bless God with them for their recovery, and to put them in mind of their sick-bed promises, and to exhort them to improve their renewed lives to the best purposes.

Christian conference was a part of religion which he was desirous to revive and promote, and he managed it with great prudence, and to universal satisfaction and advantage.

Of these conferences there were two sorts; one more stated and solemn with young persons, in which he always presided; the matters to be conferred about were no unprofitable ques-

tions, or matters of doubtful disputation, but points of faith and cases of conscience; and care was taken to avoid all vain jangling, and whatever might tend to puff up the minds of young people, or make them despise one another. Every one that has tried this method, knows it requires much wisdom and patience to manage it well: Mr. Henry had good success in it, and indeed his heart was much set upon it. In his diary, Jan. 1. 1697, you have this note on a sacramental occasion: "That which I desire particularly to receive from the Lord at his table to-morrow, is wisdom for personal conference about matters of religion."

The other sort of conferences were managed with more freedom, among the most considerable and intelligent of his people; some of them used to meet frequently at each others houses, and entertain themselves not only with a cheerful refreshment for the body, but with profitable discourse becoming Christians, not parting without praying. On these occasions Mr. Henry was the best companion in the world; his good wit and good sense, his candid and cheerful temper, his openness of heart to his friends, and readiness to communicate whatever might be either pleasing or useful, and his great integrity and unaffected piety, made his conversation extremely agreeable to all his friends. One that knew him intimately well, used to say of him, "No man more serious in religion, no man more pleasant in conversation, no man more honest in every thing."

These conferences thus managed were of very good use both to promote knowledge, and to cultivate Christian love and friendship, much to be preferred before those formal visits, and those vain and affected compliments that are become so fashionable among persons of distinction, even in those places where one would expect conversation should be best understood, and in its highest improvement.

In a congregation so well instructed as this at Chester was, where their minister was not only a watchman set over them, but an example to the flock, one would think there could be little occasion for that most ungrateful part of a minister's work, admonition and reproof; and yet Mr. Henry had his share of this kind of labour and sorrow, especially among the younger sort, though not with them only. The people that attended on his ministry were, generally speaking, a sober, knowing, serious people: but if, in the apostles' days, there were some spots in their feasts of charity, some clouds without

water, some that fed themselves without fear, some carried about of winds, whose fruit withered, we cannot wonder if the best churches in this degenerate age are not altogether free from such blemishes to the Christian profession.

He was a great example of ministerial wisdom, courage, and faithfulness in this hardest part of his office: he could truly say, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" Nothing came nearer his heart; I find him recording it in his diary, that on such a day, viz. Sept. 8. 1691, Mr. Newcome of Manchester preached two excellent sermons at Chester, from 2 Tim. ii. 9. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from all iniquity;" on which he says, "The Lord do me good by those sermons; professors have need of cautions;" and afterwards adds, "Such a day I expounded Paul's farewell, Acts xx. O that I could follow his example, warning every one night and day with tears."

Whenever he heard an evil report of any that attended on his ministry, his way was to go to them or send for them, inquiring strictly and impartially into the truth of the case; and when he found it was too true, he failed not to deal plainly and faithfully with them, setting before them the evil of their sin, and calling them, in the name of God, to speedy and thorough repentance.

Sometimes he saw the good effect of private admonition, and greatly rejoiced in it; to convert a sinner from the error of his way, was to save a soul from death, and to cover a multitude of sins: but he often found the heart of the sinner hardened, and laments the unsuccessfulness of his best endeavours; "I have laboured (says he in his diary) with such a one to set before him the evil of his sin. O that I could see him duly affected, but nothing less than the grace of God will do it."

When the sin was scandalous, he thought fit, notwithstanding some signs of shame and grief, to suspend the offender from the Lord's table for a time: and to his great sorrow he once found himself obliged to suspend three persons at the same time; the censure was passed on them publicly, and a congregational fast was kept on the sad occasion, minister and people humbling themselves before the Lord, that any such accursed things should be found in the camp, earnestly begging repentance for sinners, the continuance of the pre-

sence of God with them, and the reviving of his work among them.

Some that had openly offended, were deeply humbled; God owning and blessing his own institutions, they were made willing to confess their sins, to take shame to themselves, and to give glory to God before all the congregation; and they were received in again, and God restored their souls, and they walked closely and humbly with him ever after.

Others were not willing to put their stubborn necks under this yoke of Christ; the discipline was too strict for them, and instead of being angry with themselves, they were displeased with their faithful minister; they thought him too severe, though nothing was remoter from his temper than rigour and severity: what he did was from conscience of his duty to God, and compassion to the souls of men, that sin might not rest upon them.

It would make a man's heart to bleed to hear how Mr. Henry bemoans himself on these occasions: in one place, after having mentioned the sin of one that he had promised himself comfort in, he adds, "Then said I, I have laboured in vain, and spent my strength for nothing." In another place, "These things are a temptation to me to lay aside the pastoral charge, but I dare not, I cannot do it; my God will humble me; let him that thinketh he standeth, or is thought by his friends to stand, take heed lest he fall: the Lord make it a warning to me, and to us all."

Some of these unhappy persons turned away, and followed him no more; but it was generally observed, there was the remarkable hand of a displeased God upon them, both as to their spiritual and their outward estate; they fell under a manifest blast, and withered and died away from the root, and stood like pillars of salt, monuments of God's anger, and warnings to others that they should hear and fear, and not dare to do so wickedly.

Others, though they did not so entirely subject themselves to those rules of discipline which Christ has instituted in his church, yet they could never prevail with themselves wholly to desert his ministry; his faithfulness to their souls was manifest, not only to God, but to their own consciences; they did not forsake the assembling of themselves together, they attended on the preaching of the word, but walked heavily and uncomfortably, for want of a more entire subjection to the gospel of Christ.

That some such offences as these should arise in a large congregation, in a populous city abounding with ill examples, in the long course of four and twenty years, is not to be wondered at, nor laid as a reproach upon Mr. Henry's ministry; they are happy congregations that have no such roots of bitterness springing up to trouble and defile them.

The sorrow Mr. Henry felt in his soul for these things, was abundantly compensated by the great satisfaction and joy that he had in the good effects of his ministry upon the far greater part of his people; he saw many come into the household of faith, and grow up there in wisdom and holiness, and spiritual peace and strength, adorning the doctrine of their Saviour, and strengthening the hands of their minister; few, if any, in our age had more reason than he to thank God, and take courage for the visible success and the numerous seals of his ministry in Chester, and about it; many of those, I doubt not, he has now met in heaven, and many more are following after, and will be his joy and his crown in the day of the Lord Jesus.

We have a very uncommon instance of his diligence, and zeal, and love to souls, in the frequent compassionate visits that he made to the poor prisoners, and even to the malefactors in the castle of Chester, to pray with them and preach to them, both before and after their trial and condemnation.

I cannot find out the precise time when he begun this charitable practice, but it is certain he continued in it for many years. I am told he first went to visit those poor wretches at the request of the jailor's wife, who was a religious person, and had a tender concern for the souls of those that had sinned themselves into such deplorable circumstances.

This good woman observing how very remiss and formal those were in dealing with the souls of the prisoners that challenged it as their province, persuaded some of them to send for Mr. Henry, and desire his counsel and prayers; the poor prisoners were the more ready to hearken to her, because she always treated them with tenderness and pity, in a far different manner from what is usual with others in such places; by this means she had convinced them, that she designed nothing so much as their real good both for time and eternity.

Mr. Henry readily complied with their request, though he knew the work would be attended with many and great difficulties, and when he had done his utmost, it was very doubtful what the success would be; he must expect to meet

with censures, and perhaps with direct opposition, but his zealous soul, ever strongly bent upon doing good, surmounted all these discouragements; he was willing to endure any labour, and run any risks, if peradventure those might be at last recovered out of the snare of the devil, that had been led captive by him at his will.

If I may be allowed to make my conjecture, I cannot but think he was the more encouraged to undertake a task of this nature, from an instance that was fresh in the memory of good people in Chester, when Mr. Henry came among them, I mean the conversion of a soldier, condemned for murder, which under God was owing to the great pains that Mr. Hall, then a prisoner for non-conformity, took with him. The soldier's name was Spooner, one that had been a very loose and profligate man, and was concerned with others in a drunken riot, in which a poor man lost his life. Mr. Hall, who was pastor to that people in Chester that invited Mr. Henry, was sent a prisoner to the castle for six months, for no other fault than preaching the gospel; but God sent him thither for good to this poor criminal, who lay in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. Mr. Hall found him very ignorant and stupid, but God was pleased to bless the serious discourse he had with him, and the fervent prayers he put up to God with him and for him. Conscience was awakened to purpose, and God sealed his instruction; a wonderful change was wrought in him in a little time, and he made such a declaration of the manner of God's working upon his soul when he came to die, and of the benefit he had received by Mr. Hall's instructions and prayers, as very much affected all that heard him, and indeed filled the whole city with wonder, every one looking upon him as such another monument of free grace as the thief on the cross, and glorifying God on his behalf; that good old minister thought his six months imprisonment abundantly compensated by being an instrument of so much good to a precious soul, that was in so much danger of perishing for ever.

It is rational to think this happy precedent encouraged Mr. Henry, and excited him to this service; it is certain he was not ignorant of it, for I find him taking notice of it in one of his papers, as a service done by that worthy, pious Mr. Hall, (so he justly calls him), but a little before he died.

However, this is certain, Mr. Henry spent many an hour, put up many a prayer, preached many a sermon, with the prisoners, from the year 1690 to the year 1710; for so long it appears by his diary he was employed in that work.

On the 13th of December 1690, he tells us he was sent for to a soldier that had been wounded in a drunken fray, and now like to die of his wounds, and seemed to be very sensible of his sin. Sometime after, he was sent for to the castle by one that was to be executed for clipping the king's coin; he prayed with him, and endeavoured to convince him of sin; but observes, that the man seemed rather amazed or fullen. "I did (says he) what God enabled me to do for him, but it is hard to do any thing to purpose. O that others would hear and fear."

Some of the prisoners that he had instructed and prayed with, after they were acquitted, would come to him and thank him for his labour of love, and would promise to take heed to their ways: how those promises were performed, does not appear to me, but even this was an encouragement to go on in that work.

This account of his preaching at the castle, I find was on the 15th of November 1695, and it was on the case of Manasseh's being bound in fetters, and then brought to repentance, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12. He writes, he hopes some good was done that day. From that time forward he was very frequent, not only in praying with them, but preaching to them, and always upon the most apposite awakening subjects, the poor criminals attending in their chains. He takes notice of one that had discovered a great sense of sin, and would gladly have had Mr. Henry to have gone along with him to the place of execution; but he thought fit to wave it, lest he should give offence, and so be deprived of such opportunities of service for the future.

It would be too tedious to give a particular account of the suitable texts he chose on such occasions; I shall mention but a few, as Prov. xiv. 12. "There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof is the ways of death." Prov. xiv. 9. "Fools make a mock at sin." And preaching to the condemned, Eccles. ix. 5. "The living know they must die," but who knows what it is to die? At another time to some acquitted or pardoned, from Lev. xxvi. 23, 24. "If ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary to me, then will I also walk contrary

to you, and will bring seven times more plagues upon you, according to your sins."

Another time he has set it down in his diary, that God helped him to preach with some ease and enlargement to the prisoners, from Psal. cxix. 67. "Before I was afflicted I went astray:" and (says he) it seemed to be to acceptance with men; but that is a small matter if it be not to their edification, and yet I hope some good is done, for the prison opens the ear to discipline.

At another time, when the assizes drew near, he was desirous to prepare them for that day, by putting them in mind of a day yet more awful, from 2 Thess. i. 7, 8. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and after condemnation, from Jer. iii. 21. "A voice was heard in the high places, weeping and supplication; for they have perverted their way, and have forgotten the Lord their God;" and from Luke xxii. 5. "But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear, fear him who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him."

I shall mention but one more, and that is a sermon which he preached on the 8th of May 1701, to the prisoners, where three women were under sentence of death for murdering their bastard children. It was a very awful and awakening discourse, from James i. 15. "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death;" not the death of the body only, (that is not the finishing stroke of sin), but the death and damnation of the soul. While he reasoned about these things, the poor wretches trembled exceedingly; and several good people that used to attend these prison-sermons were mightily affected: tears and trembling were every where observed. He visited these poor wretches a second and third time after this, and was with them the very day that they died. It is not easy in such cases clearly to discern whether God gives true repentance or no, but he had done all he could for them, and they were very thankful for the compassion he had shewed to their poor souls.

Thus he continued labouring with poor ignorant wretched sinners from time to time for their good, till in the latter end of the year 1710, when he was sent for to one Charles

Povel, who was then under sentence of condemnation, and was desired by him and the rest of the prisoners to preach to them; and he had consented: but the curate of St. Mary's being desirous to prevent it, offered to come and preach himself, and did so. However, Mr. Henry thought fit to go in the evening, and give them a serious discourse about the penitent thief on the cross, which I think was the last sermon he preached in that place. The governor of the castle was prevailed upon to discourage it; and Mr. Henry had a discharge from that charitable service, on which he had diligently attended for so many years, without the least penny of profit to himself, or without any other inducement besides his zeal for God and the souls of men. I shall make no reflection upon the conduct of those that deprived poor souls of such assistance at a time when they stood most in need of it. I cannot but think, when they coolly and calmly considered the matter, they must needs reflect upon themselves for it. I am sure the poor prisoners lamented their loss, which I fear has not been made up to this day.

Another sort of ministerial service in which Mr. Henry was engaged at Chester, was preaching reformation-sermons. It pleased God several years ago to stir up the hearts of many good people of several denominations, to endeavour the giving a check to that immorality and profaneness that had proceeded so far, and proceeded so long in England. Against this encroaching enemy, London made the first stand, and their example encouraged many others both in England and Ireland too.

The first notice I find of any such design in Chester was in the year 1698, when, on the 16th of August, Mr. Henry has this memorandum in his diary: "Some overtures are now made towards forming a society in Chester for reformation of manners, and many seem very forward in it." This he observed with great satisfaction.

This good work was first set on foot in that city by those of the established church. They were happy in a bishop and dean that had the interests of practical religion very much at heart, Dr. Stratford and Dr. Fog, men of great learning and true piety, both excellent preachers, and greatly grieved at the open and scandalous wickedness that abounded in that city, and every where throughout the nation.

A society was formed, and a monthly Friday-lecture set up at St. Peter's to promote this good design. Mr. Henry

observes upon it, "This brings to mind the days of old." The first sermon on that occasion was preached by the good bishop, from Rom. xxiii. 14. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof." The congregation was very numerous; the discourse plain and warm, pressing both magistrates and private persons to do their utmost for suppressing profaneness. Mr. Henry declares the great pleasure he had in hearing that sermon; "I greatly rejoice (says he) in this public testimony borne against the wickedness of the wicked, and I bless God for it."

The next reformation-lecture was preached by Dr. Fog, from Eph. v. 11. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Mr. Henry observes it was an excellent discourse, very much to the purpose, pressing home the necessary duty of beating down sin and wickedness; and he adds, "I bless God for this sermon; and as I have from my heart forgiven, so I will endeavour to forget all that the dean has at any time said against Dissenters, and against me in particular. Such preaching against sin, and such endeavours to suppress it, will contribute as much as any thing to heal differences among those that fear God."

The Dissenters in Chester did not hastily thrust themselves into this good work, for fear of giving any disgust to those that had already embarked in it, and thereby hindering rather than helping it forward; but that their hearts were entirely in it, none could question. And on one of their congregational fasts, kept on the 3d of May, the same year in which this work was begun, they determined in a very particular manner to seek the Lord, first for the deliverance of the Protestants in France, and then for the success and prosperity of reformation-work in England, and especially in Chester. Mr. Henry preached from Psal. vii. 9. "O let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end!" the wickedness of the wicked in the two great branches of it, persecution and profaneness.

The latter end of that year he began a set of reformation-sermons on the lecture-day, and I think the method he observed is worth our knowledge. His first sermon was to press upon all the necessity of personal reformation, from Jer. xxv. 5. "Turn ye again now, every one from his evil way, and from the evil of his doings."

The next lecture-day he preached a sermon about family-reformation, from Job xxii. 23. "Put away iniquity from thy tabernacle;" observing, that personal and family reformation were the most proper and necessary steps towards public reformation.

Then he went on to press it as a duty upon all that make a more open profession of religion, first to reprove and reform one another, before they go about to reform the profane, from John xiii. 14. "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet;" not only condescend to one another, but reform one another; for Christ washed his disciples' feet, not only as a sign of his own condescension, but of their sanctification; "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me."

His next sermon about reformation was from Psal. cxix. 53. "Horror hath taken hold of me, because of the wicked that forsake thy law;" shewing, that in our endeavours to reform sinners, we should be deeply affected with the horrid nature and consequences of sin. Another sermon for that purpose was from 2 Kings ix. 32. "Who is on my side?" observing, it is pity there should be any sidings among us, but for God against Baal. Soon after he preached a sermon both for reformation and preparation for the Lord's supper, from 1 Chron. xxix. 5. "Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?" And in his diary writes, "I desire this evening solemnly to consecrate my service to the Lord, such as it is; the Lord graciously accept it."

About this time the Dissenting ministers in Cheshire settled a reformation-lecture to be kept statedly in several parts of the country. The first was preached at Macclesfield by Mr. Henry, about the sanctification of the sabbath; the next at Knutsford, August 1. 1699, by Mr. Scoles, from James v. 19, 20; the next at Chester, by Mr. James Owen, about king Hezekiah's proclamation, from 2 Chron. xxx. 8. "Now be ye not stiff-necked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the Lord."

In the mean time, the reformation-lectures at St. Peter's, by the clergy of the city and diocese, were constantly kept up, and Mr. Henry as constantly attended them; and he has taken particular notice in his diary, what good and proper discourses he heard from Mr. Newcome of Tatnal, Mr. Gareniers, Mr. Newton, Mr. Thane, Dr. Entwistle, Mr. Gipps of Bury, and divers more. But this good work had a great

many enemies, and by this time some of them began openly to deride and oppose it, and form parties and interests against it.

This was a great grief of heart to the good bishop and dean, who had laboured more abundantly in it; and they saw it necessary to form an association for the more effectual carrying on the design, which was subscribed by themselves and several clergymen in and about the city. And now it was that they found it expedient to call in help from the Dissenters; and the dean himself proposed it to Mr. John Hulton, Mr. Henry's brother, that the Dissenters should form themselves into a society for the same purpose, and act in concert with the other; which they very readily hearkened to, and met at Mr. Henry's house on the 22d of July 1700, and engaged themselves in it, according to a method then agreed upon. But I find he was apprehensive there would not be much done: however, he says, it will turn to us for a testimony; and some days after he waited on the dean, who received him very kindly, shewed him their association, and encouraged him and his friends to go on in it.

A month or two after this association of the clergy, the lecture at St. Peter's was preached by a stranger, one of the curates at Winwick in Lancashire, from Eph. v. 6, 7. "Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be ye not therefore partakers with them." He very much pressed the reformation, and in all their places to contribute their utmost to it, but reflected on the Dissenters as very unfit to engage in it, because they were themselves in a schism. This was not well approved by those of the church party who were hearty in the design; and the society that had first engaged in it sent presently to that of the Dissenters, that notwithstanding what had been said in the sermon of Friday last, against their meddling in the business of reformation, it was their desire that they would proceed in it, and that for their parts they were ready to give them all possible encouragement.

But the torrent of profaneness was too strong for them all; the hearts of many that should have promoted the work of reformation were bent against it. A very unhappy instance of this Mr. Henry gives us in his diary, Oct. 13. that same year, in these words, "My brother Hulton, on Lord's day was seven-night, observing the church-wardens of St. Peter's,

with a strange minister, and others, go to Mr. Holland's alehouse, and sit there three hours, told the recorder of it. The bishop came to hear of it; and Mr. Hulton desired his lordship to admonish them. They set light by the bishop, and challenged the magistrates to fine them: whereupon Mr. Hulton was summoned to inform against them, and did so; and they were fined, but were very abusive to him."

However, the monthly lectures went on, and Mr. Henry Newcome took another turn, preaching from 1 Thess. v. 8. But let us who are of the day be sober;" in many things very well, but in the close of his sermon departing from that good temper for which he had been esteemed, and in which his friends and his father's friends hoped he would have continued to the last, he broke out into very severe invectives against the Dissenters, because they did not conform to the church; suggesting, that thereby they hardened the profane, and disabled themselves to reform them. On which Mr. Henry writes, "The Lord be judge between us; perhaps it will be found that the body of Dissenters have been the strongest bulwark against profaneness in England."

The next of those lectures the learned and worthy dean came up himself, and preached an excellent sermon from Joshua xxii. 17, 18. "Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleansed to this day, but that ye must turn away this day from following the Lord? And it will be, seeing ye rebel to-day against the Lord, that to-morrow he will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel." I have often heard Mr. Henry speak of that sermon with the highest approbation. It was full of holy zeal and Christian courage, in reproving sharply all, whether magistrates or ministers, that had any way discountenanced and obstructed the work of reformation. He told them plainly, for his part, he did verily believe, if that opportunity was lost, God would never entrust them with such another, but would contend with them in his righteous judgments.

This admirable effort of true apostolical zeal could only serve to keep the good design on foot a while longer, but was not able to put new life and vigour into it; every body saw where the rebukes and the lash of the laws fell: heavy complaints were made, that by these means the enemies of the church were encouraged to expose and ruin the friends of the church for human frailties; that this must needs pro-

duce consequences that would make all true churchmen repent of it when it was too late.

Such suggestions were too much regarded, and though the lecture continued a few months longer, and some very good sermons were preached, yet prosecutions were very much discouraged, and the lectures not well attended; and at length, the 5th of September 1701, the dean preached from Heb. xii. 15. "Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;" and after many serious warnings, in the close of his sermon he said, "This lecture had been set up on purpose to stir up magistrates and others to be active in their places for the suppressing immorality and profaneness; and all having been said that could be said about it, it was thought convenient to adjourn it *sine die*." On which Mr. Henry says in his diary, "So it is now let fall; I wish it be not an occasion of triumph to the profane, who have a very great antipathy to the bishop and the dean for their pious zeal against sin."

The Dissenting ministers continued their reformation-sermons both in Chester and several other parts of the country, in which none was more frequently employed than Mr. Henry; but they wanted power to make their endeavours effectual: and so it proved at length, as Mr. Henry foresaw, from their first coming in to it, that considering the temper of most men, and the great corruption that abounded, the greatest good he could expect from the attempt was, that as for those whose hearts were right with God in it, it would turn to them for a testimony.

Thus far we have considered Mr. Matthew Henry in his exemplary and even unparalleled industry in his ministry at Chester, and chiefly among his own people, both in his constant and occasional services, and those both of a private and public nature.

We are yet to behold him in a more large and extensive sphere of usefulness, not to the neglect or prejudice of his own place and people; for he was so constant to them, that he has observed in his diary, June 3. 1711, being then at London, "that it was the first time he had been absent from Chester on the first day of the month, the sacrament-day, for this twenty-four years."

But though his own flock were not neglected, yet he could not confine his services to them; he had a just care for all

the churches, and especially those that were within his line; I mean, such as he could visit and return home at the week's end. He took a circuit of near thirty miles, and frequently lent his assistance to the Dissenting ministers and churches that were in that compass, and he was always thankfully received by them.

His labours of this kind came under several heads, viz. frequent week-day lectures in the places adjacent, stated meetings of ministers twice a year, public ordinations, funeral sermons for ministers and others in the country round about, and the journeys that he took yearly, to spread the favour of the knowledge of Christ as far as lay in his power; having, as has often been observed, an active zealous spirit, he took up a resolution never to refuse an invitation to preach as long as he had opportunity and ability for it. This his readiness was well known in Cheshire, and the good people were so wise for themselves as never to let him want for an invitation. The towns and villages that lay near to Chester enjoyed a great share of his labours; in some of these he preached a monthly lecture, as at Moldsworth, Grange, Brombrough, Elton, Saighton, and frequently at Beeston, Mickleale, and Peckfurton; he was often employed at Wrexham, Shocklidge, Burton, and Darnel. There was scarce a week but he was at one or more of these places, preaching the gospel; besides his constant work at home, of which so much has been said already, many a handful of good seed he has sown in those parts, which has already produced a good increase, and I hope the fruits of it will appear and abound yet more, and turn to a good account in the great harvest-day.

I am assured Mr. Henry's settlement at Chester was a very great mercy to the parts adjacent; there was no great appearance of serious godliness in the villages about that city till his coming among them. Some few aged Christians he found here and there, that retained the sense and favour of religion, and read the scriptures, and prayed in their families; but the younger sort were too remiss, and contented themselves to do as their neighbours did, and in all likelihood the things that remained of the good old Puritan way would in a little time have died, if God had not sent some such lively and active minister as he was among them; but he soon sought out and found opportunities of reviving the good work in those parts; and the remnant rejoiced to see, not only that

God had sent one to them to help them to finish well, but to their children and families too, to engage them more fully for God and godliness.

In the year 1691, the Dissenting ministers in Cheshire agreed to have their general meetings twice in the year. The first of these that I meet with in Mr. Henry's papers was on the 30th of June that year, and it was at Knutsford, where Mr. Kynaston was minister. I cannot but notice with much satisfaction, that this should be the place of their provincial assemblies, which was the first place where I was called to the pastoral charge in the year 1687; and there being something peculiar in it, I hope I shall be pardoned if I give it a place in these memoirs.

The town of Knutsford had been favoured above most other places in Cheshire with an excellent godly minister in public, Mr. Turner, a man of great simplicity and godly sincerity, that used to keep days of prayer with some of his hearers, inviting them to pray as well as himself, according to the way of the good old Puritans; his conversation was so eminently holy, and his discipline so strict, that few or none attempted to come to the Lord's table but who were persons of sober and blameless lives; and though there were some in the town, and several about it, that were Dissenters in their judgments, such as Mr. Isaac Antrobus, Mr. Peter Wood, Mr. William Lestwich, Mr. John Boslock, Dr. Smith, yet most of them were satisfied to join in all ordinances, and continued to do so as long as he lived; and they truly loved and honoured him, and blessed God for his ministry, and he was an instrument of much good amongst them; it was a place of much sobriety and regard to religion as any in those parts. There was at that time an aged dissenting minister living among them, Mr. Lee, a gentleman by birth, and an humble upright person, a good scholar, but through bodily indisposition not capable of constant work.

Upon the death of Mr. Turner, which I think was not long before Mr. Henry came to Chester, the town of Knutsford was divided very much about the choice of another minister. Though there be a chapel in the town, and a church about half a mile distance from town, they are in the parish of Rosthorne; however, the inhabitants had been in use to choose their own minister, and thought they had a legal as well as scripture right to do so: but some of the inhabitants that were for greater strictness in the rituals of religion, and a greater liberty in morals than Mr. Turner had

approved of, were very industrious to have a minister of their own temper ; and rather than fail of their design, after much contention with their neighbours, they chose to give up all pretensions to the right of electing their minister, and applied themselves to the bishops' court about it. The case was somewhat intricate where the right of presentation lay, but at length the high church party prevailed, and Mr. Holmes, who was chaplain to the Lord Delamer, was fixed with them: he was a person of very good learning, and of sober conversation, his parents were Dissenters, but his judgment was for a very rigorous conformity.

Many of the inhabitants that had never been Dissenters refused to own him as their minister, and joined with others that had been always Dissenters in judgment, to set up a meeting, and invite a dissenting minister to come and preach to them. In this they were encouraged by several eminent Christians that lived near that place, such as the pious widow of Colonel Venables of Wincham, Mr. Lee of Oughterton, and his son at Ollerton, Mr. Brookes and Mr. Low of Chelford, Mr. Colthurst, Mrs. Ward of Caperthorne, Mr. Holland of Mobberly, Mr. Philip Wright, Mr. Randall Merrill of Pever, Mr. Robert Kell, and several others, most of whom had been hearers of the Rev. Mr. Edge at Withington, and were some of the most eminent persons for religious knowledge and wisdom, for a spirit of prayer, for a true Christian temper and regular conversation, that ever I had the happiness to be acquainted with. Mr. Edge was a minister of extraordinary gravity, wisdom, and seriousness, a judicious spiritual preacher ; he died not long before Mr. Turner.

In this design of theirs to set up a meeting at Knutsford, they consulted the ministers of their acquaintance. I received an invitation from them, and by the advice of both the Mr. Henrys, father and son, and Mr. Harvey of Chester, and particularly my kind friend Mr. Henthorn, who knew the place well, and many of the people, and did not a little encourage their design, I adventured upon the work, though under some discouragements in my own mind from the great contentions there had been, and still were, in the town, in which I was loath to engage myself, and feared lest those that had not been Dissenters till on this occasion would not prove so steady or so regular as those that had been better instructed in the principles of Non-conformity. But in all

these things God was pleased graciously to prevent us, and to encourage us; we met with less opposition than we expected, and with more success and comfort than we could promise ourselves; we had a full congregation, many young persons came in; we had great peace, and love, and unanimity among ourselves; the effects of former contentions began to cease, and the prejudices of the other side to abate; and, I hope, the valuable interests, not of party, but of practical religion, were promoted, and continue to be so to this day.

This came to be the place of those yearly meetings which were set up by the dissenting ministers in Cheshire, as hath been observed, but not till some time after I had left Knutsford, and was placed at Coventry. These meetings, I think, took their rise from that agreement between the ministers of the Presbyterian and the Congregational way, that was concluded and published in London, and recommended to all parts of the nation. At this meeting, which is the first I find mentioned in Mr. Henry's diary, the articles of agreement were approved and subscribed; Mr. Angier was moderator, and many things were discoursed of to their mutual satisfaction and advantage; but here he expresses his grief that there were so few aged ministers left in that country. On the 11th of August the same year, 1691, they had another meeting, to state and settle more fully the methods to be observed for the future.

From that time their meetings were fixed to be twice a year, in May and in August: those in August were twice appointed to be at the house of Mr. George Hulmes at Bucklowhill, about two miles from Knutsford, but after we removed to Knutsford, as the more convenient place; and there I remember my dear brother Wilson of Warwick and I met the Cheshire ministers on the 24th of May 1692, where Mr. Henry preached an excellent sermon from Philem. 2. "Archippus our fellow-soldier." We had no sooner finished the public work of the day, but we received the good news of the mighty blow given the French fleet by the Earl of Orford, which was a great addition to the comfort we had in the society of so many of our friends and brethren. The year after, 1693, Mr. Wilson with myself contrived again to come from Warwickshire to meet our brethren at Knutsford; but by reason of Mr. Wilson's indisposition on the road, we could not reach them till the evening, May 16.

when the public work was over. We went from thence the next day with Mr. Henry to Manchester, where he preached with his wonted seriousness from John xii. 32. "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." Here in his diary he expresses the very great pleasure he had in the company of Mr. Newcome, Mr. Oliver Heywood, Mr. Finch, besides many of his younger brethren.

In these general meetings, after the work of praying and preaching was over, the ministers consulted together about the affairs of their several congregations, whatever difficulties they met with about the admission of any to church-membership, or suspension from it, about the removal of ministers from one place to another; they were here proposed, and advice was given how to proceed, but not as authoritatively binding the conscience of any particular person, ministers, or others. Affairs of the state, or the established church, were never meddled with; they kept themselves within their own line, counselling and comforting each other, and God was pleased to make these their consultations a means of promoting and preserving love, peace, and order amongst them; and this prudent method was kept up by them all the time Mr. Henry lived at Chester, and is continued to this day at the same place, whereafter two worthy young ministers, Mr. Kynaston and Mr. Low, their present minister Mr. Lee, is, with faithfulness and diligence, watching for their souls.

It was usual with them, on such occasions as those, to determine the times and places for public ordinations, which was no small part of Mr. Henry's work, and that which he always proceeded in with very great care and caution, as many passages I meet with in his diary fully demonstrate.

The first of these ordinations which he mentions in his diary was on the 27th of September 1692, at Knutsford, where he met several ministers both of Cheshire and Lancashire; the candidates were Mr. Hartley, Dr. Adam Holland, Mr. Dearneley, Mr. Traverse, Mr. Edge, and Mr. Haly; the ordainers were Mr. Risley, Mr. Crompton, Mr. Angier, Mr. Bradshaw, Mr. Aspinwal, and Mr. Ainsworth; the candidates were examined in the languages the evening before at Mr. Kynaston's house, and read and defended their Theses; the day after was kept as a fast on the solemn occasion; Mr. Bradshaw prayed, Mr. Aspinwal preached from Rom. x. 25. "How shall they preach except they be sent?" Mr. Crompton, as moderator, took their confessions and or-

dination-vows, and Mr. Angier concluded with an excellent exhortation, delivered with great affection. Mr. Henry has recorded it as a good day; "The candidates (says he) gave good satisfaction; blessed be God for the rising generation, the Lord double his Spirit upon them."

Four of these are still living, and in great usefulness; Mr. Hartley at Ashby de la Zouch, Dr. Holland at Macclesfield, Mr. Traverse at Litchfield, and Mr. Haly at Lempster. Mr. Dearnely died about the beginning of June 1701, at Ringay in Cheshire, greatly lamented by all that knew how judicious, how humble, how serious, and how acceptable a minister he was; his memory is fresh and precious in those parts to this day.

It appears by this account, that Mr. Henry was not actually engaged in this ordination; and indeed he was not so forward to engage in that part of the ministerial work as in the rest; which yet did not proceed from any doubt he had of the lawfulness of it, but from his desire that it might be performed by those of more advanced years, and on that account he declined that service several times, when much pressed to it: but as the aged ministers died, or were disabled from attending that work, he found himself constrained in conscience to join with others in it.

The first ordination in which Mr. Henry was concerned, I think, was that of Dr. Benyon, who succeeded Mr. Philip Henry at Broad Oak. This was in January 1699: he writes thus concerning it: "On the 23d instant I went to Broad Oak, my brother Hulton with me, to join in ordaining Mr. Samuel Benyon; I have always declined joining in such work, judging it fittest to be done by aged ministers, but this I could not decline. Worthy Mr. Tallents designed to be with us, but durst not venture, which was a great disappointment. Mr. Owen and Mr. Lawrence came in the evening. Mr. Benyon was examined in the languages and philosophy, and made a Thesis, '*An revelatio divina fuerit necessaria ad salutem lapsi hominis?*' and defended it. We rejoiced in his great abilities.

"The 24th was kept as a fast-day in Broad Oak meeting-house, a competent number present. Mr. Latham prayed, Mr. Lawrence gave an account of the business we met about, prayed, and sung a psalm; Mr. Doughty prayed; I preached, from Isa. vi. 8. "Here am I, send me," and prayed; Mr. Owen, as moderator, demanded a confession of his

faith, and ordination-vows, which he made abundantly to our satisfaction. We then proceeded to set him apart; Mr. Owen concluded with the exhortation. We have reason to say it was a good day, and the Lord was among us." This was that eminently learned, laborious, and pious Dr. Benyon, who died at Salop in the midst of great usefulness, and whose character Mr. Henry has transmitted to posterity.

On the 17th of June 1700, he hath left this account in his diary: "This day I went to Macclesfield to join with my brethren the ministers of Cheshire and Lancashire in an ordination: I have formerly declined that work, but now I see it is a service that must be done. I am satisfied in the validity of ordination by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery; and though we want national establishment, yet that cannot be essential. I went with a true desire to honour God, and promote the interests of Christ's kingdom. The next day was the day appointed for that work; I engaged with fear and trembling. Mr. Scoles prayed and read a psalm and a chapter, Mr. Lawrence prayed, Mr. Chorlton preached, Eph. iii. 21. "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end, amen;" Mr. Jones prayed; then Mr. Angier, who was moderator, demanded of the candidates in order, a confession of their faith, and a distinct answer to the questions, which was done fully. The candidates were Mr. Samuel Eaton of Manchester, Mr. Stephen Hughs of Wrexham, Mr. Brookes of Blakely, Mr. John Bradely of Knighton, Mr. Richard Milnes of Stopford, Mr. Fletcher of Chorton, Mr. Grimshaw of Manchester; the ordainers Mr. Angier, Mr. Chorlton, Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Jones, Mr. Scoles, Mr. Aldred, and myself. After the ordination, I gave the exhortation. I desire to give glory to God for any assistance therein: we had a very great assembly, and I trust God was in the midst of us of a truth. We gave them certificates; Mr. Billingsley of Hull was providentially with us: it was a very comfortable day, blessed be God."

The next occasion I met with of this nature was in June 1702. An ordination was appointed at Warrington; Mr. Jonathan Harvey of Chester was one of the candidates. Mr. Henry spent some time with him at his house before they went out, and spoke something from Psal. lxxi. 16. "I will go on in the strength of the Lord God, I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." The same day

they went to Warrington. He writes upon this, "I have had much struggle with myself, being tempted to decline what might give offence, and yet, in the integrity of my heart, (I hope I can say) I do it when the wheel turns against us; the greatest caution and tenderness we can now use will not be remembered in our favour, but diligence and courage in improving our duty of liberty will be reflected on by ourselves to our comfort; welcome the will of God.

"The 16th day was a day of fasting and prayer, and imposition of hands in a very great congregation at Warrington, where I trust God was with us of a truth. The ordained were Mr. Rice Pruthero of Bragginton in Montgomeryshire, Mr. James Whittel of Lee in Lancashire, Mr. John Heywood of Blackley in Lancashire, Mr. Reynald Tetlaw of Tinfel in Cheshire, Mr. Jonathan Harvey of Chester, Mr. James Lawton of Liverpool, Mr. Nicholas Waterhouse of Ringay in Cheshire, Mr. William Pendlebury of Kendal in Westmoreland; the ordainers were Mess. Risley, Crompton, Eaton, Ainsworth, Jones, Aldred, and myself. Mr. Charles Owen began with prayer and reading, I prayed, Mr. Jones preached from 2 Cor. xii. 15. "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you." I took the confession and vows, and Mr. Risley concluded with a serious exhortation. The work of the day was done to general satisfaction; there were many other ministers present."

The same year, in the month of August, he was concerned in another good service of the same kind, the account of which I give you from himself: "August 17. 1702, I went in the evening, Mr. Bradley being with me, to Wrexham, and met Mr. James Owen, &c. there, for the ordaining of Mr. John Evans and Mr. Edward Kenrick. We spent some time in the evening in examining Mr. Evans, whom God has endowed with excellent parts. The 18th was a day of fasting and prayer, in a numerous congregation: Mr. Charles Owen, Mr. Jenkin Thomas, and Mr. Benyon prayed, Mr. J. Owen prayed and preached, then Mr. Evans and Mr. Kenrick made their confessions and vows with much seriousness, and were solemnly set apart; I closed with the exhortation, and hope we had the presence of God with us: I returned to Chester that night, and though I had a fall from my horse, was preserved from hurt, praised be God."

After this good service done, the fruits whereof the church of God is now reaping, and is expecting still to reap, in a

more full harvest, I do not find him engaged in any other ordination for some years, i. e. not till 1706, and then he has left it upon record, that on the 6th of August he was present at an ordination-fast at Knutsford: "We ordained Mr. Leoline Edwards of Tinfel, Mr. Thomas Perrot of Newmarket in Flintshire, and Mr. Silas Sidebothom of Wheelock. The Thefes were taken the evening before; Mr. Angier prayed, Mr. Lawrence preached from 2 Tim. ii. 2. "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." I took their confessions of faith and ordination-vows, and gave the exhortation. We were about eighteen ministers: we had a comfortable day, and I hope many were edified."

The next year, 1707, May 7. there was another ordination at Knutsford; the candidates were Mr. Twemlow and Mr. Garfide, son to that good, aged, humble minister that lived and died near Macclesfield several years ago, greatly esteemed by all that knew him, and especially by the good people at Chester, to whom he used to preach very privately in the times of persecution; a person of uncommon learning and judgment, and gifts in preaching and prayer, and of great simplicity and godly sincerity, affecting plainness in his garb and way of living beneath what his friends thought was due to his station as a minister; but he was contented and best pleased with it. It was a great satisfaction to those of his friends that were yet alive, to see his son so well qualified for the ministry, and solemnly engaged in it. The ordainers were Mr. Angier, Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Henry, Dr. Holland, and Mr. Low. On the work of that day Mr. Henry writes, "We were seriously put in mind of our own ordination-vows. O that the obligations of them may always abide upon me."

By these instances it is very evident, that though Mr. Henry was not forward to engage in the business of ordination, and very careful to lay hands suddenly on no man, yet his judgment and practice were entirely for a regular, ministerial ordination; and he found that some ministers, who, in compliance with the sentiments of the people, had dispensed with that solemnity, were not very easy in their own minds about it afterwards; and he does very particularly observe, that after Mr. E. Birch had been pastor near twenty years without ministerial ordination, yet when invited to another

congregation of the same persuasion, he procured three or four ministers privately to ordain him with imposition of hands; and Mr. Henry was desired by that congregation which he left, to join with the worthy and reverend Mr. Timothy Jolly to ordain Mr. Hugh Worthington, which was done on the 2d of September 1707, at Dean-row, on which he thus expresses himself: "I am going by appointment to Winslow, willing to become all things to all men. I preached from 2 Cor. v. 18. "Hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;" Mr. Angier prayed over him; Mr. Jolly gave the exhortation, from Matth. xxviii. 20. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." He spoke many things very affecting: we lay at Winslow, and were much refreshed with mutual love, which is as the holy anointing oil: the Hon. Mr. Cecil Booth was with us in the evening. Mr. Jolly is of a very loving, healing spirit."

The same year God thrust yet more labourers into his harvest. On the 21st of October there was an ordination-fast at Nantwich; the evening was spent in examining the candidates at Mr. Lawrence's house; they were Mr. Lessingham of Grantham, who brought very good testimonials, Mr. William Brian of Newcastle, Mr. John King of Stone, and Mr. John Kenrick of Wrexham. Mr. Lawrence began, Mr. Irlam prayed, Dr. Holland preached from Acts xxvi. 17, 18. Mr. Henry took their confessions and vows, and has left this memorial of it: "We were in all about twenty ministers; the candidates discovered much seriousness: we hope they are all likely to serve our great Master. We were much refreshed, and there were none to make us afraid."

I find not any other ordination that Mr. Henry was concerned in till the 7th of May 1712, and that was of Mr. Daniel Maddox, a relation of his, who it seems had been a preacher some years, and was now ordained privately at Mr. Hutton's house in Chester, by Messrs. Henry, Murray, Bassnet, and Benyon; Mr. Henry preached from Amos ii. 11. "I raised up your sons for prophets, and your young men for Nazarites." This was the same month in which he left Chester, and came to London.

After he came to London, the first call that I find he had to a work of this nature was from St. Alban's; the dissenting congregation there, after the death of their aged, learned, excellent minister, Mr. Jonathan Grew, who had faithfully served them in their spiritual concerns for many years, chose

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Mr. Samuel Clark, great-grandson to Mr. Samuel Clark of Bennet-Fink; and on the 16th of September 1712, several ministers from London met the ministers of that country, and, in a very large assembly, he was solemnly set apart to the sacred ministry. Dr. Williams presided, Mr. Smith preached, and Mr. Henry gave the exhortation, with great judgment, life, and affection: the congregation seemed to be very attentive and serious.

He was also concerned in the ordination of Mr. Atkinson at the meeting-house in Silver-street, and preached from Isa. vi. 8. "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I, send me." Mr. Smith gave the exhortation. This was Jan. 7. 1713: both are made public.

The last ordination in which he bore a part was that of Mr. Wood, who succeeds Mr. Burgefs: there Mr. Henry gave the exhortation, going through the various characters given in scripture to ministers, as stewards, builders, husbandmen; and shewing very particularly their duty under every character.

I have been the more large and particular in the account of this part of his work, out of a sincere respect to all those my brethren, in whose ordination Mr. Henry was concerned; I am assured they take it as an honour to them, and I heartily pray, that a double portion of that excellent spirit that rested upon him may descend to them; that the remembrance of his zeal and diligence may quicken them to be followers of him, as he was a follower of Christ Jesus.

While Mr. Henry continued in the country, he used to take a yearly circuit to Nantwich, and so to Newcastle and Stone, and sometimes to Stafford and Drayton, preaching where-ever he came, and oftentimes every day in the week. Some years before he left Chester, he took another yearly journey into Lancashire, and preached at Manchester, Bolton, Chowbent, Hindley, and Warrington, and all this in a week's time; for he chose rather to be at any expence of labour, than not to be with his own people on the Lord's day.

His ministry could be no where more valued than it was in Lancashire. He contracted a very intimate acquaintance with Mr. James Woods of Atherton, and with Mr. Mort's family, a family well known in that country for their constant regard to religion, and great respect to the faithful ministers of Christ, both in the present and last generation. Mr.

Robert Mort of Wartonhall, father to him who is at present the head of the family, was a gentleman that feared God above many: he was one of the greatest examples of humility, charity, and primitive Christianity, that our age has known: he was loved and honoured by all, of what persuasion soever; the most profane and loose of all his neighbours, were hardly ever known to speak evil of him: he greatly honoured God and religion, and his posterity are blessed. I hope I shall be excused for offering this mite to the memory of so good a Christian, who was my father's relation, and kind like a father to his widow and her children.

The last instance I shall give of Mr. Henry's more general and occasional labours, is that of his preaching funeral-sermons for ministers, and others in the country round about. In this melancholy work he was often employed, and he would manage it with the greatest care and affection: for he was a true lover of his brethren while they lived, and a hearty mourner for them when they died. His diary is full of memoirs of this nature, and I shall collect some passages out of it, by which his love and honour for his brethren will sufficiently appear, and not only of those at whose funeral sermons he was called to preach, but of many others, whose death he lamented, and whose memory he greatly honoured.

I the rather choose to take this liberty, because, in the excellent account he has given us of his father's life, he thought fit to take notice of those that were his particular friends, and to give them a just and honourable character; as knowing very well that a man's friends have so large a room in his affections and cares, that no account of his life can be tolerably perfect, in which they are left out.

In the year 1695, I find him several times in his diary taking notice of the illness of a young candidate for the ministry; Mr. Becket, chaplain to that great patroness of religion and of Non-conformity, the Lady Sarah, daughter to the Right Honourable the Earl of Chesterfield, and widow of Sir Richard Hoghton of Hoghton-tower in Lancashire, mother to that very worthy gentleman, Sir Charles Hoghton. It seems Mr. Becket had for some time been under a very ill habit of body, which at length issued in a consumption; Mr. Henry often visited him. He appears to have been a very serious person, and on the 15th of March he finished well, telling Mr. Henry he was willing to die; and though it was exceeding difficult for him to speak, yet he

called with some earnestness to all about him, and bid them prepare to follow him to the glorious mansions above: his last words were, "Come, Lord Jesus; I am now going." He was but twenty-five years of age; he was buried at Wrenbury, the minister of the place preaching his funeral-sermon, from 2 Cor. v. 1. "We know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

The very next month he received the afflicting news of the death of Mr. John Wilson at Warwick, of whom mention has been already made in these papers; he was very dear to Mr. Henry, and highly valued by him, as indeed he was by all that knew him. On the first news of his death, Mr. Henry writes thus: "April 12. 1695. This day I hear that my dear brother Wilson finished his course on Monday last; a great loss, and I should say irreparable, did I not know that God has the residue of the Spirit." And the day after: "This day I had a letter from Mr. T. of the death of dear Mr. Wilson last Monday about noon, who lay for some time before he died in raptures of joy. And on May 15. "I have been with Mrs. King, now returned from Warwick, who tells me many very affecting things concerning her dear son Mr. J. Wilson; that a little before he died he said, He could now, through grace, stand upon the brink of one world, and look into another without any amazement; that he had indeed some struggles in his soul, but he had endeavoured to deal roundly with himself in renewing his repentance, and now he had boldness to enter into the holiest, through the blood of Jesus."

In the same year, May 27. Mr. Henry laments the death of Mr. James Newcome, grandson to the excellent Mr. Henry Newcome of Manchester. This young man, by the death of his father, was cast upon the care of his good grandfather, and brought up by him from his infancy; he was a youth of excellent parts, very serious, modest, and of a sweet disposition; all his friends rejoiced to observe so much in him of his grandfather's temper, gifts, and graces; he was bred up for the ministry, under the care of good Mr. Timothy Jolly of Sheffield, and was taken away when just entering upon the work; every one expected great things from him; his death was universally lamented, and some observed that it made but too deep an impression upon Mr. Newcome's spirit, who they feared went mourning for him to his grave.

This year, Mr. Henry observes, lodged several aged ministers in the grave. He takes particular notice of the death of Mr. Henry Pendlebury of Rochdale in Lancashire, a man of great learning and strict godliness, and every ministerial qualification; of him you have an account from Dr. Calamy, and I may be excused if I cannot pass him by without some token of esteem, who lodged in my father's house during the execution of the five-mile act, and kindly received me into his house several years after. When Mr. Pendlebury died, which was about the middle of June, that country lost another aged, learned, and judicious minister, Mr. Roger Baldwin of Eccles, the place of my fathers' sepulchres. The removal of two such men in so short a time was very affecting to Mr. Henry, who observes, that breach upon breach produces sorrow upon sorrow, and prays the Lord, who has the residue of the Spirit, to make it up to us.

The same month you have him mournfully attending the death of Mr. Taylor of Wem, of whom he has given this character in his father's life, "That he was a man of a very tender spirit, humble and low in his own eyes, but of approved integrity, and finished well." Mr. Henry senior preached his funeral sermon, 2 Cor. iv. 7. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels." On which his son added in his own diary, "O that I could learn to be more sensible of my own frailty and mortality."

Before that year was finished, Lancashire lost one of the greatest blessings that ever the providence of God favoured it with in the last age. When I say this, every body will conclude I mean that reverend, holy, and evangelical minister, Mr. Henry Newcome, who died September 17. He did not live quite half a year after the death of his beloved grandson. Mr. Henry expresses himself on this occasion with an uncommon concern, as a very great loss to the church of God, and puts up an earnest prayer for his dear friend and brother Mr. Chorlton, who was fellow-labourer with Mr. Newcome, that the mantle of Elijah might rest upon Elisha.

The next year began with new trials and losses of the same nature. On the 11th of January 1696, Mr. Henry has inserted in his diary, "This day I hear the melancholy tidings of the death of my dear and worthy friend Mr. Thomas Kynaston of Knutsford, younger than I, but fitter for heaven. He died yesterday. God do me good by this pro-

vidence, that I also may watch as one that must give an account." By this short memorandum, it is evident how great an esteem he had for Mr. Kynaston, and it was not without good ground. Mr. Kynaston was son to a very good and faithful minister, who, though he could never thoroughly conform to the church of England, yet was satisfied to read some of the prayers; and by the favour of Mr. Chetwood of Whitley (father to Sir John Chetwood) exercised his ministry at Whitley-Chapel without disturbance. He was an acceptable and useful preacher; his ministry was much frequented, and attended with very good success. He died in the midst of his days, and left his son very young. The father's friends did not forget their kindness to the dead or to the living. Mrs. Venables of Wincham, Mr. Greg of Chester, Mr. Bent of Warrington, and some others, were very helpful to the widow with their advice and assistance; by which means she was not only enabled to give her children a good education, but to leave them a competency when she died. Her eldest son, of whom we speak, after he had gone through his school-learning, was sent to Natland, near Kendal, in Westmoreland, where, by the lenity of the government, the reverend and learned Mr. Richard Frankland held a private academy for several years. After some time spent there, he resided in Manchester, and under the ministry of Mr. Newcome, he greatly improved in religion, and in ministerial gifts. He endeavoured (not to say affected) to form himself in praying and preaching upon Mr. Newcome's example, and a better he could not have chosen; and God gave him a humble, meek, honest, loving disposition of soul, which, together with his ministerial gifts, made him a very acceptable person, beloved by his people, by his brethren in the ministry, and well spoken of by all men. But he died young, as I take it, about thirty years old, not full of days, but full of faith, and of the good fruits of his ministry. A little before he died, he called some of his hearers together, to tell them solemnly, as a dying man, that he gave his hearty consent to that gospel covenant which he made the subject of his ministry among them, and fully depended upon the grace and truth of it. He left a widow with four children, and with child of the fifth. His eldest son is entered upon the ministry, and in God the widow and fatherless have found mercy.

The next observation that I find in Mr. Henry's diary, of the death of ministers, is on the 16th of October 1697; and

that was concerning the death of the Reverend Mr. Beresford, who, I think, was turned out of a church in Derby by the act of uniformity, had lived afterwards very privately at Sheffnal in Shropshire, and died at Weston, the seat of that wife and religious lady the Lady Wilbraham, a sincere and generous friend to all good ministers, whether Conformists or Nonconformists, without any difference.

He has taken very particular notice in his diary of the death of the Rev. Mr. Harvey, his fellow-labourer in the same city, though not in the same congregation. His remark upon it is, "I went this morning, Nov. 28. 1699, between seven and eight o'clock to see Mr. Harvey, and found him newly departed out of this world: his passage was made easy, and there were no bands in his death. When I had prayed with him last night, I said to him, I hope, Sir, you have now inward peace and comfort. He answered, I trust I have, and said no more. He was taken ill but last Friday, and was so well, that he baptised Mr. Cook's child the last Lord's day in the meeting, after Mr. Ainsworth had preached. O that I might hear the voice of this rod! I am called to prepare, it is a voice to me. I have this day been blessing God for the comfort we have had these twelve years past, and that I have endeavoured to carry it aright towards him, and bewailing it wherein I have been defective. As to the disposing of the congregation, I have solemnly, and with the greatest indifference, referred it to God, resolving to be purely passive, and earnestly begging that it may be so ordered, as may redound most to the glory of God and the furtherance of the gospel in this place." Mr. Henry preached on this occasion on the lecture-day, from Luke xiv. 21. concerning the account that ministers are to give of themselves to God.

In the year 1700, June 27. he expresses a very great concern to hear of the death of Mr. John Owen, son to that very holy, humble, and laborious minister Mr. Hugh Owen of Merionethshire, a burning and shining light in a dark, cold, and barren country; one eminently self-denying, and mortified to the things of this world. His son John was grave and serious from his childhood. He was a student under Mr. Frankland; and after some years spent with him as his pupil, was chosen to be his assistant: and whilst he was so, his example and endeavours were of very good use to several young men in the family. He had made great improvements in re-

ligion and learning before he left that place, and entered upon the ministry with great seriousness and good acceptance, and chose to spend his time and strength in the same place where his father lived and died. He was, I think, the only dissenting minister in Merionethshire. Some occasions leading him to Salop, he fell sick there at Mr. Orton's house, and in nine days time died, being about thirty years of age, to the great grief of all his acquaintance, and to the unspeakable loss of the church of God. Mr. Henry was sent for to his funeral, and preached on that sad occasion, at Mr. Jones's meeting-house, from Heb. xiii. 17. "They watch for your souls as they that must give an account." The night before he died, Mr. James Owen being with him, expressed his hopes and desires that God would spare him in his great usefulness in Wales, where he would be so much missed. He meekly replied, "It would be a proud thought to think that God has need of any of us." Great lamentation was made for him: and not without reason; for there were few men like minded.

The next month we find Mr. Henry invited to attend an aged minister to his grave, the Reverend Mr. Evans of Wrexham, a very serious preacher, of good learning and great zeal for God. He was strictly congregational, and wished all his brethren round about him had been in that respect as he was. His second wife was the widow of the famous Mr. Vavasour Powel; and though descended of the ancient family of the Gerrards, related to the Earl of Macclesfield, and of the side of the Royalists, yet when very young, from convictions of conscience, was determined for the despised way of the Puritans, and chose to suffer reproach with them. She was a zealous, chearful, and suitable companion to them in all their services and sufferings, and still lives to see her only son in a station of great usefulness in the church of God. Mr. Henry has observed in his diary, that though Mr. Evans had been for some time under a manifest decay in his memory, and so rendered unserviceable; yet a little while before he died, which was in his 72d year, he spoke with more apprehension than usual, rejoicing in the Lord Jesus Christ, as his only Rock; and when it was said to him that he was going to his Father's house, he chearfully answered, "It will not be well with me till I am there." Some present desired him to leave some good counsel with them; to whom he replied, "Go to God by prayer." The funeral-sermon was preached by Mr D. Jones, from Acts xxi. 14. "The will of the

Lord be done." The very same ministers that had that day three weeks laid young Mr. John Owen in the grave, now attended the funeral of good, aged Mr. Evans.

On the 10th of October 1702, Mr. Henry very much laments the death of Mr. Nath. Scoles of Macclesfield; of whom he says, "I hear that my worthy friend and dear brother Scoles died Friday last. He was almost three years younger than I, a very ingenuous man, a florid preacher, and very serious and affectionate in all his performances. He met with affliction in his marriage, which occasioned some unevenness in his temper; but he was a man of true piety and integrity. He died of a palsy, in complication with other distempers. His afflictions had broken his spirits very much. The Lord prepare me to go after. His father was a learned godly minister in Manchester."

In April 16, 1703, he records the death of that eminently holy minister Mr. Thomas Jolly, near Clitherow in Lancashire, an aged witness; and observes, that a little before he departed, though he was speechless, he discovered great signs of satisfaction and joy: the righteous has not only hope, but joy in his death.

The same year, in the month of August, he has inserted a memorial of the death of another worthy minister in Lancashire, Mr. John Crompton of Cockey-chapel, of whom he truly says, "He was a man of great worth and great humility." And indeed it were easy to enlarge upon the characters of Mr. Jolly and Mr. Crompton, men of the first rank, both for ministerial gifts and graces, steadfast to their principles in trying times, and an ornament to their holy profession; but I forbear, their praise is in all the churches of that country.

I meet with nothing more of this nature till about two years after, and then he expresses a more than ordinary concern at the account he had that day received of the death of Mr. John Chorlton of Manchester; his words are, "I received this morning the sad tidings of my dear and worthy brother, who, after about a fortnight's illness of a diabetes, died on Wednesday last, the 16th instant. He was eminent for solid judgment, great thought, an extraordinary quickness and readiness of expression, a casuist one of a thousand, a wonderful clear head, and one that did 'dominari in concionibus,' and of great sincerity and serious piety, has been very useful in educating youth; he was in the 40th year of

his age, survived his wife about half a year, my beloved friend and correspondent about sixteen years. Oh Lord God, wilt thou make a full end!" His funeral sermon was preached and published by Mr. James Coningham, his friend and fellow-labourer, and he has given him his just character. Mr. Chorlton and Mr. Scoles were born in the same town, were bred up together from their childhood, were educated together both in the languages and sciences, were very entirely knit together in affection, and have been justly accounted two of the most considerable men for good sense and learning that the town of Manchester, or the parts adjacent, have produced.

In the same year he has observed, that within the compass of three months died eight Nonconforming ministers, middle aged, as he supposed, between thirty and sixty, viz. Mr. Kentish of Bristol, Mr. Traverse of Dublin, Mr. Chorlton of Manchester, Mr. Anderton of Newcastle, Mr. Milling of Dublin, formerly minister of the English church at Leyden, Mr. Peters of Leeds, Mr. Hickman of Birmingham, and Mr. Nevet of Bridgenorth; on which he adds, "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men."

The beginning of the year 1706, Jan. 4. he mentions the death of Mr. Robert Holland, minister at Lostock in Chester, of whom he writes thus, "This good friend of mine, after nine or ten weeks of illness, finished his course the last Lord's day, and was buried in his own meeting-place on Wednesday. He was an honest plain man, happily familiar in speaking to ordinary people; aged between fifty and sixty, as I suppose; educated to a trade, but strongly inclined to the ministry, had a good acquaintance with the Hebrew tongue, and was very useful."

The same year, March 20. died Mr. Latham minister in Wem, of whom Mr. Henry gives this account: "He had been long under weakness, and yet kept from his work but two Lord's days. On Tuesday he baptised a child in his chamber, sitting on his couch, prayed thrice, and opened the covenant with much affection and enlargement; after that said little, but looked with a chearful countenance; was very ill when put to bed, and would get up again soon after midnight; laid him down on his couch with these words, 'Now I have almost finished my course;' and so died, aged fifty-three. He was a very knowing prudent man, a judi-

cious and affectionate preacher. He was always afflicted with a great hoarseness, which was the effect of the smallpox in his youth, which made speaking difficult to himself, and not so pleasing to those that were not used to him; but yet he went on with his work, and was in labours abundant. I first knew him at Mickledale, where he did good, but had little encouragement. He had been about ten years at Wem, a strict Dissenter, well beloved, an useful man to many in their secular affairs. He left a widow and six children, the eldest about twenty, entering upon the ministry, the youngest about four years old. We were eight ministers to attend his remains to the grave. The Lord prepare me for my change. I preached at the meeting-house from Acts xx. 24. 'That I might finish my course with joy,' &c.

The next month was a month of sorrow to Mr. Henry, and many more, in the loss of that great and good man Mr. James Owen of Salop; he was seized with a fit of the stone two days after Mr. Latham's funeral. On the 3d of April Mr. Henry had an account that he was very ill, a total suppression of urine for above a week; on the 6th he heard that the case was very dangerous; on the 8th Mr. Henry set out for Salop, to see how it was with him, between hope and fear, but when he came to Whixal, the news of his death met him. He hastened forward to the house of mourning, and found that he had finished his course with joy a little after midnight. He died very chearfully, and was in heaven before he left the earth. He had not extreme pain, nor was very much swelled, but by no means used could the obstruction be removed. He received the sentence of death in himself with great chearfulness, and expressed his entire satisfaction in his Nonconformity; and one reason was, that he had seen most of the life and power of godliness among the Dissenters: he was much lamented by all sorts. Mr. Henry preached his funeral sermon on the 11th, from Acts xx. 37. "And they all wept sore." He adds in his diary, "Great lamentation was made for him, and honour done him at his death: the Lord prepare me to go after, and preserve on my mind the impressions of this providence." A very just and particular account of his life and death has been published by his own brother, which is worth every one's perusal.

The same year, in the month of July, Mr. Henry was again called to this melancholy work, by the death of Mr. Nathaniel Long of Wrexham, son to the reverend aged Dr.

Long of Newcastle. The news came to Mr. Henry when he was diverting himself with the company of his good friends at Boreatton; on which he writes, "This is an admonition to me to be a better husband of my time." On the 17th he went to the funeral of Mr. Long, of whom he says, "He had been about three months declining of a consumption; he walked out but the day before he died. He was about thirty years of age, a serious good young man, and likely to have been very useful there. It is greatly to be lamented that such as he are so soon removed. I preached on that occasion from 2 Cor. iv. 12. 'So then death works in us, but life in you.' The Lord follow it with his blessing. I attempted to return that night to Chester, but the waters were so out at Marford, that I could not get over. It is the greatest flood that has been known, and much damage done to the hay and corn, which God can take away in the season thereof."

The year 1708 deprived the town of Salop of two of their faithful ministers in two months time, Mr. Samuel Benyon and the reverend and learned Mr. Francis Tallents, and by their death Mr. Henry lost two of his most intimate and highly esteemed friends that he had in the world; you may take the account in his own words.

"March 6. In the afternoon I heard the sad tidings of the death of Dr. Benyon; he began to be not well on the Lord's day was a se'nnight, but made light of it, thought it an intermitting fever, preached on Tuesday, walked out on Wednesday, but went worse and worse. Mr. Tallents knew not of his illness till Saturday; on Monday it appeared to be a malignant fever; he had the advice of Dr. Hollings and Dr. Bostock; on Tuesday he grew delirious, and died on Thursday evening; a sad stroke. Oh that I may hear the voice of the Lord's controversy!

"On the 8th I went to Salop, and in the afternoon attended the sorrowful funeral; it is a house of mourning indeed, great mourning. He was universally beloved and well spoken of: he had not finished his 35th year. After the precious remains were deposited, I endeavoured in much weakness to improve the providence from 1 Pet. i. 24, 25. 'For all flesh is as grass, and the glory of man as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away, but the word of the Lord endureth for ever; and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.' Good Mr. Tallents is in a good measure of health, in his 89th year."

But the next month he also went to his long home: so Mr. Henry has left in his diary, April 13. "Tidings are brought me this morning that good Mr. Tallents finished his course with joy last Lord's day evening near midnight: he had that day taken some food; he said to those about him, he had much comfort in his soul. He died without sigh or groan. He was born November 1619, very much a gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian, a great admirer of Christ and free grace, a man of eminent prudence and heavenly-mindedness."

I know not whether it be proper for me to relate, but I find it impossible for me to conceal, that in Mr. Henry's diary on the 20th of January, this same year, he takes notice of a dream he had about Mr. Tallents, in these words, "*Hac nocte somniavi me epistolam accepisse a Domino Tallents, dat. Martii primo, in qua narravit se jam statim migraturum ad Dominum Brian, quod in somnio intellexi de ædibus Domini Brian in Salopia, non cogitans quod Dominus Brian mortuus esset: sed expergefactus de morte amici mei timere cæpi.*"

The day that Mr. Henry heard of Mr. Tallents's death he was at Whitechurch, engaged in the ordination of Mr. Benyon; which I mention now, because I omitted it in the proper place. Mr. Tallents had given him the Thesis, which was, "*Justitia qua coram Deo subsistimus est justitia Christi Mediatoris.*" The ordainers were Mr. Doughty, Mr. David Jones, Mr. Lawrence, and Mr. Henry. Mr. Jones preached from 2 Tim. ii. 15. "Study to shew thyself approved to God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

On the 14th Mr. Henry, with his friend Mr. T. from London, who came the evening before to Whitechurch, went to Boreatton, and the next day to Salop, to the funeral of Mr. Tallents: he was buried in St. Mary's church, in the grave where, fifty years before, his first wife was buried. Mr. Dawes would not presume to read over him, "in sure and certain hope," but only "in hope." Mr. Henry preached at the meeting from the text which he appointed, "Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." He directed that the motto upon his funeral rings should be, "There is a life after this."

The next year the dissenting congregation in Knutsford were deprived of their faithful and beloved minister, Mr. Sa-

muel Low : what thoughts of heart this caused in Mr. Henry, himself will best tell you.

" April 19. 1709. I hear of the death of my dear friend and brother, Mr. Samuel Low, this morning about ten o'clock, of a fever, the ninth day. It is a great breach upon us : he was in the midst of his days, seemed to be very healthful, a good scholar, and an excellent preacher, of eminent humility, modesty, and meekness. On the 21st I went early to Knutsford to Mr. Low's funeral, a faithful minister, aged about 39, of whom the world was not worthy. He had been about thirteen years at Knutsford ; I find him universally lamented. He greatly recommended himself by a dispassionate temper of mind : he was buried in the meeting-place ; I preached on the sad occasion from John xii. 25. ' Yet a little while, and the light is with you ; walk while ye have the light.' In the evening we discoursed about a successor. Great breaches made upon that congregation this last year : this is the third funeral out of the same house in less than a year, old Mr. Isaac Antrobus, his eldest son, and now Mr. Low his son-in-law. The Lord fit us for sudden changes."

The next funeral at which I find him, was that of Mr. Jenkin Evans of Oswestre. The value that Mr. Henry had for him, his own diary will best discover. " On the 27th of August 1709, I went to Oswestre to visit Mr. Jenkin Evans, who is very weak ; his illness began with vomiting blood : he is an excellent man, and can ill be spared. Lord, do not make a full end."

On the 10th of August following, thus : " I have been writing to Mr. Jenkin Evans, who is to be tapped for his dropsy. On the 20th, I now hear of his death ; he was a good minister of Christ. It is a very great loss. On the 25th, I went by Wrexham to Oswestre, to preach a funeral sermon for Mr. Evans, on the text he desired, 2 Tim. i. 12. ' I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.' He was in his 35th year, born in Glamorganshire, was much beloved in Oswestre, and did a great deal of good in the country round about."

In the year 1710, in the month of May, I find Mr. Henry at St. Helen's Chapel in Lancashire, lamenting the loss that congregation had sustained of their faithful pastor Mr. James Naylor, a very useful person, aged about forty-six ; and upon very short notice he preached to them, suit-

able to that sad providence, from 2 Cor. iv. 11. "Death worketh in us."

In the same year, Sept. 12. he takes notice of the death of Mr. Samuel Eaton of Manchester, minister to the dissenting congregation at Stand in Prestwich parish: and justly observes, that in him the church of God had lost a person of great learning, and great integrity. He was very much superior to most of his brethren, both for learning and estate; but the most humble, condescending, affectionate friend that I have ever known. He had buried, not long before he died, two sons, and his good son-in-law, Mr. Cheyney of Warrington. He was about fifty-four years of age: his memory is and will be precious, and I hope his family will be blessed.

Mr. Henry had lived to see a great many of his brethren laid in the silent dust, and was a true mourner for them; but still he had the comfort of the neighbourhood and conversation of his dear and intimate friend, Mr. Samuel Lawrence of Nantwich, and this was a great support to him under the sorrow he felt for the death of others; but in the year 1712, God took away that excellent servant of his, to the great loss and grief of his people, and all his friends. The first news of his illness Mr. Henry met with at Knutsford, at the meeting of ministers on the 24th of April; he had been round at Warrington, Chowbent, and Manchester, and observes, the journey had been very pleasant to him till he heard this news. The next day he returned to Chester, and there the sad tidings met him, that Mr. Lawrence died the evening before, about ten of the clock. "A sad providence, (says he) Lord, teach me the meaning of it."

On the 28th he writes, "I went early to Nantwich, attended the remains of dear Mr. Lawrence to the grave: he was my intimate bosom friend from my youth. He was of a serious spirit betimes, a good scholar, and a serious judicious preacher. He had been at Nantwich twenty-four years, an instrument of much good there, respected by all, and well spoken of. He died on the 9th day of the fever, was delirious by fits from the 5th day: he was buried in the chancel at Nantwich, much lamented. I preached from Philip. ii. 7. 'Sorrow upon sorrow.'"

I shall take the liberty to add, that I happened at that time to be down in Cheshire; and having spent the day before, which was the Lord's day, with those of my good old

friends at Knutsford that were still alive, I there heard of Mr. Lawrence's death, and that he was to be buried on Monday: my sincere esteem and affection for him constrained me to attend his funeral; and, I must say, I never saw a more mournful one in all my life, both at the house and in the assembly. Mr. Henry was almost dissolved in tears, had much ado to proceed, and so was the whole auditory. Mr. Lawrence had a good report of all, and of the truth itself: he was a man of wonderful prudence, integrity, and good temper; his way of preaching was not altogether so affectionate as that of some others, but it was very spiritual and serious, and very much fitted to move and melt the heart of the hearers; there was much in him that resembled old Mr. Henry, both in temper, conversation, and preaching. All his friends rejoice that he has left a son behind him, engaged in the same sacred work, and walking in the same spirit, and in the same steps.

After his removal to London, I know not that he preached the funeral sermons for any ministers, except two, both of them his old and faithful friends, Mr. Stretton and Mr. Burges, the one in July 1712, the other in January 1713; they were persons too well known in London, and throughout England, to need a character from me. Their funeral sermons are printed, and a due debt paid to their memory.

My design in being so particular in the account of Mr. Henry's affection for his brethren, both living and dying, is to recommend the same temper to those of us that yet survive, that brotherly love among dissenting ministers may always continue, and yet not be confined to those of our own persuasion, but extend itself (as I am sure his did) to all that in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, both theirs and ours; and I must own, I could not but find some pleasure (though with an alloy of grief) in looking upon the monuments of those worthy ministers, who were intimate friends and acquaintance of mine own, and with whom I have spent many a pleasant hour. When I think how many of them are gone, I wonder how I come to be here still. But our times are in the hands of God.

And now I have gone over this most important part of Mr. Henry's life and character, his ministerial conduct, and unparalleled diligence, fidelity, and usefulness in that sacred work to which he had so solemnly devoted himself; I have chiefly insisted upon his abundant labours, both stated and oc-

casional, in Chester and the adjacent parts, and touch upon other things but incidentally; and though the account may seem extravagant and incredible to those who were strangers to him, yet there are a thousand witnesses in that corner of England, that can vouch for the truth of these things; and some will be ready to say, the one half has not been told. But let any one put the several parts of this account together, and consider the vast compass and variety of labours and services that he was engaged in continually, and they must own, few lives have been so filled up as his was.

CHAP. V.

The Course that he took, and the Means that he used, to keep up this holy Life, Vigour, and Industry in the ministerial Work, viz. his redeeming of Time, giving himself to Prayer, his Observation of God's dealing with him, and frequent renewing his Covenant with God.

THOSE that put together the various parts of Mr. Henry's labours, as they have been related here, and consider that, besides what has been mentioned, he spent a great deal of time and pains in composing his expositions and other writings for the press, will surely be desirous to know what method he took, and what means he used, to maintain and keep up so much life and industry for so many years, and to go on so unweariedly in his Master's work.

Among other things that contributed to this his uncommon zeal and diligence, I shall mention a few, which all that knew him could not but observe, and which the papers he has left behind him very amply testify; I mean his great value for time, his prayerfulness, observation, and frequent renewings of his covenant with God; by these means he was not only kept close to his work, but greatly encouraged and strengthened in it.

He always discovered a mighty sense of the worth of time: from his childhood he had a great aversion to any thing that looked like time wasting; the common and (as they are accounted) the innocent diversions of youth, he despised and disliked, and as he grew in years he still shewed a greater

esteem for precious time. Next to his proper work and business, nothing pleased him so much as the company and conversation of his friends, and he always treated them with great affection and cheerfulness; and yet sometimes, and often in his diary, you find him complaining, that a great deal of precious time is lost in the company of those we love, and that our friends are the thieves of our time; he often observes how well pleased he had been in the conversation of such and such of his friends and brethren, and yet says, "I would not for any thing live such a life for a few days together; I am always best when alone; no place like my own study; no company like good books, and especially the book of God."

He was an early riser, and put a great value upon his morning-time; he would often be in his study by five of the clock in the morning, and sometimes by four, and continue there till seven or eight; and then, after family-worship and a short refreshment, go up again till noon, and often after dinner, till four of the clock, and then go out to visit the sick, or his friends on other occasions; and in the evening, after he had dismissed his family, would be for a considerable time in his study. Such a course as this, closely followed for some years, could not but produce considerable improvements of that time, which he took care to fill up with duty. I do not find in all his papers, that any thing created a greater uneasiness than to be unnecessarily robbed of his studying time; nor any thing that he more severely reflects upon himself for, than suffering himself at any time to be unnecessarily diverted from his delightful studies.

And I cannot but observe, that the more he advanced in years, the more careful he was to redeem time, and he complains the more sensibly of the loss of it; though he was far from despising the kindness of his friends, yet you may often hear him, when invited to their houses, and entertained plentifully, and detained with variety of company, repeating David's wish, "O that I had wings like a dove, for then I would fly away, and be at rest." At another time when he had been diverted by much company, and a mixed conversation for a whole day to little advantage, he writes at night with much concern, "I look upon this as a lost day; Lord, forgive my trifling: I would rather preach twice every day in the week, than spend another day so unprofitably." I could add much more to this purpose, but I think it is not

needful; had not Mr. Henry been an extraordinary husband of his time, it would have been impossible for him to have done so much work in it.

Another thing to which we may impute his great labours, was his prayerfulness; he had both the gifts and the grace of prayer, in a very uncommon measure, and this duty was the delight of his soul; his early acquaintance with God, and that clear conscience that he had always endeavoured to keep, made the duty of prayer easy, and as it were natural to him; he not only abounded in supplications for his family and friends, but had recourse to God with great freedom about all his concerns; no journey undertaken without a particular address to God about it; no subject or course of sermons entered upon, but God was sought to for counsel, assistance, and success; no book sent to the press, how small soever, but first recommended to God in prayer. Thus he daily conversed with God, as a child with his father, and God gave him very remarkable returns of prayer, which he has left upon record with great humility and thankfulness: prayer made all his work pleasant; he went out in the strength of the Lord, and therefore he was not discouraged at the variety and multitude of labours in which he was engaged; and the answers of prayer made his work easy, for God often eminently answered him in the day when he called upon him, and strengthened him with strength in his soul. By thus waiting on God, he renewed his strength, he mounted up with wings as eagles; he often prayed that he might get upward, upward towards God, and forward towards heaven, and so earnest in those requests, that one would think his soul was indeed just upon the wing, taking its flight to heaven.

To this duty of prayer, in which he so abounded, he added that other duty of constant observation, which indeed should never be separated from it. He was a diligent and wise observer of the conduct of Providence in all outward affairs, and of the conduct of God's Spirit in the frame and workings of his own soul.

The observations he has made upon God's providential conduct, both in public and private affairs, are very many and very judicious; you frequently find at the end of his diary for the year, a rehearsal of the most remarkable occurrences of the year, with respect to the church of God at home and abroad; he had indeed a large soul, and a very great con-

cern for the honour of God, and the interest of his church in the world.

He seemed, in the year 1704, to have had expectations of some extraordinary events in favour of the reformed churches, and at the beginning thereof preached from these words, Isa. lxiii. 4. "The year of my redeemed is come." However, in his treating upon it he was very cautious, and did not presume to fix the times and seasons, which God only has in his power; but it does appear, he expected more than that year produced; for at the close thereof, he has left this remark, "The state of the Protestant churches abroad is very low, it is a day of Jacob's trouble, a valley full of dead bones; we looked that this had been the year of the Lord's recompence for the controversies of Sion, but the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

Besides the concerns of the public, which lay near his heart, he has taken very special notice in his diary of any uncommon providences, whether of mercy or judgment, towards particular families of his acquaintance, with serious and discreet reflections upon them; and we may be assured then he could not be unmindful of the state of his own family, and the changes made there. A pretty large account of these I have already given, and shall only now add, that for many years before he died, he used at the end of the year to draw up a summary account of God's dealings with his own family and near relations, and to make some good improvement of all.

In all these observations he did not, as too many do, overlook himself, and forget his own concerns; he acknowledged God in all his ways, both as to his body, and what state of health he enjoyed, or what distempers and pains he had been exercised with, and especially as to his soul; he hardly mentions a sacrament-day or a sabbath, but he takes notice what the frame of his soul has been; when enlarged, he is humbly thankful, when straitened, he bewails himself, and begs mercy in a most earnest manner; he was a very severe censor of his own performances, and how justly soever they were approved and admired by others, he frequently finds much fault with them himself. It is very observable, when he was engaged with other ministers in public service, he always speaks candidly, and sometimes very honourably, of their performances, while he greatly complains of much dullness and weakness in himself, and this not before others to beg a compliment, but

in secret between God and his own soul, where we may be assured he spoke in earnest.

It was his manner, for several years, to observe the anniversary-day of any remarkable providence relating to himself and his family : if it was afflictive, it was observed as a time of humiliation ; if any signal mercy, it was remembered with praise, and in both it was spent in serious prayer, that the sanctifying fruits might still remain and increase.

He seldom or never omits to take notice in his diary of his birth-day, which was, as hath been mentioned, the 18th of October, always keeping an account of the number of years that were gone, with proper and humble reflections upon them : the first of these, after he began his diary, was in the year 1691 ; and having observed that he had been preaching that day on Cant. v. 1. " This is my friend," with some enlargement, through great mercy, he adds, " What pity it is so sweet a favour should be to any a favour of death unto death ;" and then subjoins, " This day I am twenty-nine years old, so long reprieved from the grave, so long living altogether upon God, but little to him ; so many years mercy, and so many years sin put upon the score ; blessed be God for Jesus Christ, whose blood is that, and that only, that balance the account."

The next year, the same day, he says, " I am this day thirty years old, and am now reflecting upon a life of great mercy and of great provocations." In another place, " So many years not lived, but lost." And again, " This morning I read in course the 90th Psalm : the 12th verse I thought very suitable for me on my birth-day ; ' So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to true wisdom : ' there is no stay, no halting. I no sooner finish one year, but immediately enter upon another ; time carries not. God fit me for my great change."

On another of these days, Oct. 18. 1696, " This day completes the thirty-fourth year of my age. I have endeavoured this morning to get my heart affected with the sin in which I was born, and with the sins of my life hitherto, and with the mercy of my birth, and the mercies of my life hitherto. The Lord enable me to live a life of repentance, and a life of thankfulness."

On the next year, on the same day, he has this remark : " This day I have finished my thirty-fifth year, through the

good hand of my God upon me ; one half of the age of man, as if now in the zenith, or acme. It is high noon with me ; but my sun may go down at noon. I was affected this morning, when alone, in thinking, What I was born ? A rational creature, an helpless creature, and a sinful creature. Where I was born ? In the church of God, in a land of light, in a house of prayer. What I was born for ? To glorify God my Maker, and prepare to get to heaven."

The year after, he expresses himself thus : " I have now weathered about thirty-six years ; so long have I cumbered the ground, and yet I am spared. Others, much more useful, have never attained this age. I admire the patience of my God, and I wonder at my own folly, that being upon the brink of an awful eternal state, I am so little affected with it. The Lord teach me with a strong hand,"

The next year, thus : " I have now completed the thirty-seventh year of my age. I desire to be affected with the thoughts of God's goodness to me in my birth. Why did the knees prevent me ? I bless God that I have no cause to curse the day wherein I was born, but having obtained help of God, I continue to this day. I desire to be thankful to God that he has not left me to live an idle life ; but I have reason to lament my sins, and my sinful thoughts, by which I have lost much time. I have reason to acknowledge God's goodness to me, in giving me so great a degree of bodily health and strength above many of my brethren. I find not any sensible decay or prejudice by my work ; but I know that my soul is continually in my hand, and I am not sure to live another year." At another time, " So many years of constant mercy, I desire that every year that passeth over me may leave me so much nearer my everlasting rest, and so much fitter for it."

In the year 1701, Oct. 18. " This day, through the good hand of my God upon me, I have finished the thirty-ninth year of my pilgrimage ; and having help of God, I continue hitherto, knowing whom I have trusted, and trusting whom I have known. The greatest comfort of my life has been, that God has been pleased to use me for his service ; and my greatest grief, that I have been so little serviceable to him. I have thought much this day, what a great variety of cross events I am liable to while in the body, and how uncertain what may besal me in the next year of my life, pain or sick-

ness, broken bones, loss in my estate, death of dear relations, reproach, divisions in the congregation, public restraints and troubles; and my fortieth year may be as Israel's was, the last of sojourning in this wilderness. The worst of evils would be sin and scandal: the Lord keep me from that, and fit me for any other."

The next year he has chosen to leave this record on his birth-day. "Hodie completus est quadragesimus annus vitæ meæ. Vitæ dixi? imo potius inertiae et stultitiae meæ: sed misericordiae benignitatis et μακροθυμίας Dei erga me, Christo Mediatori me debitorem lubens agnosco, ob sustentacula, adminicula et solamina vitæ; iidemque Christo penitus confido ut accipiam a Deo meo, mere propitio remissionem peccatorum gratiam, εἰς εὐκαιρὸν ἑσθῆτα, et conservationem usque ad vitam eternam." And at another time, thus: "Hodie elapsus est annus quadragesimus primus peregrinationis meæ in hoc eremo: dies quamplurimi effluxere inanes et inutiles, et quæ mihi debent esse pudori; omnes vero placidi et benignitate divina pleni, et grato animo erga Deum semper memorandi. Quid restat nescio, pauci forsan et calamitosi: fiat voluntas Domini mei: mihi vivere est Christus, ita sit semper et in eternum et mori lucrum."

I could willingly transcribe all these yearly memorials of his birth-day, most of which are written in Latin towards the end of his life; but I would not be tedious, and shall therefore content myself to give short hints. In that of his forty-second year ended, he takes notice, that it is now so long since he came, polluted and wretched, into a polluted and wretched world, but blesses God that he was not born dead, or blind, or lame; he blesses God for preservation through so many dangers, but blesses him a thousand and a thousand times, for the hopes he has that he is born again. And in another year, "I breathe by the favour of God; I hope in his mercy, I pant for his glory." At another time, "Thus long have I lived, and lived under the divine protection, a wasting candle still kept burning, but to how little purpose? O that I may yet be fruitful, through the whole course of my life! I have found God very gracious, ready to hear prayer; I have found the world exceeding vain, and altogether unfit to be my happiness; my heart I have found to be deceitful, and prone to sin. Let me therefore always have my God in the highest esteem, the world in the greatest contempt, and my heart under watch and guard."

In the year 1711, "I have now finished my seventh climacteric year, in which I have first felt the pain of the gravel and the stone, by which it is easy for me to discern that death is working in my body, and perhaps in a little time may do its work. As for that, the will of the Lord be done; only let patience have its perfect work. I enter now upon the jubilee of my life, my fiftieth year. The term of life approaches; let me grow fitter for life eternal."

In the year 1713, on the last of his birth-days that he lived to see, he observes, that many of his friends and acquaintance had died in that year of their life, the 52d year; "but (says he) yet I live, though I am in the midst of death. May my soul be prepared for the heavenly life, and the will of the Lord be done!"

Thus did this good and faithful servant number his days, and apply himself unto the truest wisdom. Such a regard to the swift motions of time must needs contribute very much to his faithful improvement of it, whilst the far greatest part of men spend their years as a tale that is told, forget how time hastes away, and neglect the work they have to do, till their time be irrecoverably lost.

But Mr. Henry, as another spur to diligence in duty, did not only make these serious remarks upon his birth-day, in the yearly returns of it, but he used also to take a review of the year past, at the end of December, and so to prepare himself the better to begin the new year. We have many memorable passages of this nature in his papers; and I think it worth my while, and the reader's too, to insert some of them.

On the 31st of December 1691, he observes, "I am come to the close of another year, but my works have not been filled up; many empty spaces in my time and in my duties, much amiss, little done, little gained for my soul; though much mercy received, yet many talents not traded with a right: it is the blood of Christ that must set all straight between me and my God; there I rest my precious soul."

In 1693, "I am now come to the close of another year, which has begun and ended with a sabbath. I have received many mercies the year past, brought low, and helped, my dear wife spared, I yet in the land of the living, though many taken away; but how little have I done for God? What will become of me, I know not; but I find little growth. If any thing hath at any time affected me this

year, it has been some sweet desires of the glory that is to be revealed : I have often thought of it, as that which would help me in my present duty."

In the end of the year 1696, the year in which his father Warburton and his father Henry died, he writes thus: "This year is at an end; on the first day of it I preached from Prov. xxvii. 1. 'Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.' My fathers, where are they? and where am I? hastening after them. I have lost much time this year, but if through grace I have got any good, it is a greater indifferency to the things of this world, the Lord increase it."

At another time thus: "I now close the year, complaining not of God, but of myself, and of my own wretched heart; and this aggravates the complaint, that it is the same I have made formerly, and yet I do not find the matter much mended; my recourse is to the blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin, and to the new covenant, which is all my salvation, and all my desire."

The year 1699 was closed by him with more than usual solemnity; it was a year in which God had taken away many of his friends, and some of his very near relations; and at the end thereof he set himself to afflict his soul before the Lord for all his sinful failures, and is very severe with himself in confession of sin, and then proceeded to earnest prayer to God for mercy in several particulars. Take his own words:

"1. For mercy and grace for my own soul, that while I preach to others, I myself may not be a cast-away; that my corruptions may be mortified, the interest of Christ preserved and advanced in my soul, I would wrestle with God for his Spirit to cleanse and sanctify me.

"2. For strength and success in my ministerial work, direction in the choice of subjects, and the guidance and assistance of the Spirit in studying sermons, to secure me from error and mistake, to lead me into all truth, and to furnish me with acceptable words, to be a spirit of supplication in me.

"And that the blessing of God may accompany all my endeavours; O that I may be instrumental to win souls to Christ, and to build them up, that I may not labour in vain, but that God would give the increase! It is still my heart's desire to be more ready and more mighty in the scriptures.

"3. For the staying of God's controversies with me and

my family, that God would make no further breaches; but this with submission to his blessed will.

“4. For the sanctifying the breaches that have been made, that the impression of the providences of the year may not wear off or be forgotten, but that I may see my soul to be in my hand continually.

“5. For the beheaded families, the widow and the fatherless,” &c.

The last day of December 1701 he set apart, as usual, for a day of fasting, and prayer, and humiliation, “believing (says he) prayer to be an instituted way of communion with God, and fetching in mercy and grace from him. I have comfort in it daily, my daily prayers are the sweetest of my daily comforts; having of late had my body feasted above the ordinary meals, I desire this day to have my soul fed more plentifully with the duty of prayer, and thus to close the year, which (Janus-like) looks both ways. I have not had this year such remarkable afflictions as some other years; the greatest of this year hath been the death of my dear and honourable friend Madam Hunt of Boreatton. But my errands to the throne of grace to-day are,

“1. By way of lamentation and humiliation.

“I have reason to lament greatly the strength of my own corruptions, and weakness of my graces; by reason of the former I am as a smoking flax, by reason of the latter as a bruised reed. I am still full of vain thoughts, and empty of good thoughts; many of my secret prayers are wretchedly disfigured and spoiled by a multitude of distractions and diversions of mind; the flesh and the things of the flesh still minded, to the prejudice of the spirit, and the neglect of the things of the spirit.

“I have lost a great deal of precious time, and not filled it up, or else I might have gone forwarder in my notes on the Evangelist John; sins easily beset me, and I do not the things that I would.

“I have reason very much to bewail my manifold defects in my ministerial work, my coldness in prayer, that I speak not of the things of God with more clearness and concern. O how many, how great are the iniquities of my holy things!

“I bewail the little success of my ministry, and the miscarriages of some this year; for hereby my God will humble me: grief also, great grief for the sin of ----- Some of the young ones that I have catechised and taken pains with,

are no comfort to me. Lord, shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.

"The low condition of the church of God ought greatly to be lamented; the Protestant interest small, very small; a decay of piety; attempts for reformation ineffectual. Help, Lord.

"2. By way of prayer and supplication. I have many errands at the throne of grace this day.

"The pardon of sin, victory over my corruptions and temptations, mortifying of my lusts, which go not forth but by prayer and fasting. In reference to sin, I desire I may be enabled to act faith upon Rom. vi. 14. 'Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace;' and Ezek. xxxvi. 25---27. 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you,' &c.

"The increase of my ministerial gifts, a sound judgment, a clear expression, a door of utterance, readiness in the scriptures; in reference to which, I desire I may be helped to act faith upon Exod. iv. 12. 'Go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say;' and John xiv. 26. 'He shall teach you all things.'

"The success of my ministerial labours, that sinners may be converted, saints built up, and the congregation flourish. In reference to this, I desire to act faith on Matth. xxviii. ult. 'Lo I am with you always;' and Isai. lv. 10. 11. 'As the rain cometh down,' &c.

"The blessing of God upon my wife and children, that God will give his grace to my dear little ones, and drive out the foolishness bound up in their hearts. In reference to which, I desire to act faith on Isai. xlv. 3. 'I will pour out my Spirit on thy seed, and my blessing on thy offspring.'

"My other dear relations I would recommend to God's protection and blessing in prayer, my friends, acquaintance, brethren in the ministry in London, in Dublin, in Cheshire, and in Lancashire particularly, and the congregation at Broad Oak, and their minister, some members of parliament, and other gentlemen of my acquaintance.'

At the end of the year 1702, he makes this review of it:

"1. As to myself and family, the days of another year are numbered and finished, a year not made particularly re-

markable by any great change in my circumstances; no new thing created: but as usual,

“(1) The usual matter of complaint against myself; folly is still found, yea, bound up in my heart; though I hope, through grace, corruption is dying, yet not without some struggles, and much opposition from a naughty heart. I desire to lament my unskilfulness and unreadiness in scripture, my dulness in holy duties, particularly in secret. I wish I had prayed more for the success of my ministry, but sometimes I have thought I should pray more for grace to make me faithful myself, that I may be accepted of God, though not of men; but perhaps I should pray more for the prosperity of the work of God, even in my hand, though most unworthy; vain thoughts, crowds of them, are matter of complaint daily; never was the corrupt soil more fruitful in weeds.

“(2) The usual matter of thanksgiving to God. I have had great measure of health, few of my brethren so much; I note it, because perhaps the ensuing year may bring sickness or death with it. I have not ailed any thing considerable, and sometimes the highest degree of health is the next degree to sickness. I have not so many sensible memorandums of my frailty as those have that are often ailing; the Lord grant I may, by the power of grace, be kept more mindful of it.

“Ever since brother Radford died, which is now three years ago, death has made no breach among my relations; since I set out in the world, I never was so long without the death of children, or others near and dear to me. My children are very healthful, and have had no ill accident; my dear wife, though often indisposed, yet, blessed be God, under no languishing distemper, and my dear mother still continued in usefulness.

“As to my ministry, that which has been most discouraging this year is, that few young ones have come into communion, I think fewer than any other year.

“As to my estate, I have lived comfortably upon it, with what I have received here: but while in these circumstances, I cannot expect to lay by much; perhaps troubles may come which may sweep away all; I have some comfort, that I hope I do some good with what I have, and spend none of it ill.

“2. As to the public, the death of the king this year has made a great change in the face of things, though not yet

such a change as many feared ; our successes abroad, both by sea and land, have been very great, which magnifies the present government, and that we have reason to rejoice in ; the discontented in the last reign are now pleased ; I wish they may ever be so ; the high church are very high, both against the low and Dissenters. Now, Lord, behold their threatenings : we are alarmed to think of sufferings, and we need such alarms.

“ I have heartily wished that the bigotry of some violent Conformists on the one side, and of some Dissenters on the other, might drive the sober, moderate, and peaceable on both sides nearer together, and prepare things for a coalescence when God’s time is come, which I earnestly pray for, and which perhaps might be effected, if they could disentangle themselves as much from the high church as I think we are from the high Dissenters, or I wish we were.”

The next year, 1703, he makes the same recital of his sins and mercies ; observing, that even under the gospel there must be a remembrance of sins every year : “ Not (says he) such as speaks any deficiency in the sacrifice, as that under the law did, but such as speaks deficiency in my daily repentance, which ought therefore to be renewed, and the imperfection of the work of sanctification.

“ Unfixedness of thought, a wretched desultoriness. Some speak of time well spent in thinking, but I find, unless in speaking, reading, or writing, my thinking doth not turn to much account : though I have had comfort in some broken good thoughts, yet I can seldom fix my heart to a chain of them. O that the thought of my heart may be forgiven !

“ I have oft bewailed my barrenness in good discourse, and unskilfulness in beginning it, and coldness of concern for the souls of others ; and in reflection on this year, I find it has not been much better. I bless God I love good discourse, and would promote it, but I want zeal : the Lord pity me.

“ I have great reason to be thankful for continued health, for comfort in my soul, not made a terror to myself. I have oft thought this year, what a mercy it is to be kept out of the horrible pit and miry clay.

“ I have had much satisfaction this year in my Nonconformity, especially by reading Mr. Hoadley’s books, in which I see a manifest spirit of Christianity unhappily leavened by the spirit of Conformity.”

I have given a pretty large specimen of Mr. Henry's yearly observations, of God's dealings with himself, his family, and the public, of the state of his soul, and his behaviour towards God; I could add a great deal more, but the narrative begins to swell under my hand, and I would not make it burdensome to the buyer and reader. I believe all will grant, that this method of observation and reflection was a very proper and excellent means to keep his soul up to a good pitch of life, vigour, and diligence in his Master's work.

There is yet another of these means to be related, and that is, his frequent renewals of his covenant with God, and that not only at the Lord's table every month, which he did with great seriousness, but explicitly, and under his own hand, which, for several years together, he did at least once a year. As he concluded the year with reflections on the divine conduct, confession of sin, prayer and thanksgiving for mercy, so he began the year with a deliberate and solemn resignation of himself and his all to God in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The form in which he did this was not always one and the same, though to the same purpose, but with a beautiful and instructive variety of expressions. I shall give you some instances out of many of these his serious transactions with God.

On January 1. 1698, he writes thus: "My family is now in peace and health through the goodness of God, but I know not what a day, much less a year, may bring forth; I have begged to be ready for the trials and afflictions of the year, and for death, if it comes; thinking this day what a mercy it is to be born in a land where God is known, and not where he is an unknown God. I begin the year with a solemn renewed dedication of myself, my whole self to God in Christ, as my God, my Father, and portion: let this be the axis and centre of every year's revolution. Amen, O Lord, so be it."

At another time, thus: "This new year's day I have solemnly renewed the resignation and surrender of my whole self to God, as my God, deliberately, and upon good considerations. I have renounced the world and the flesh, as knowing they cannot make me happy, and have devoted my whole self to the blessed Spirit, to be enlightened and sanctified, and so recommended to the Son as qualified for an interest in his mediation, according to the tenor of the gospel. I

likewise devote myself through the Spirit to the Lord Jesus Christ, as my Advocate with the Father; and my way to him, by him to be recommended to the grace and favour of God the Father, relying upon Christ's righteousness alone; for without him I am less than nothing, worse than nothing. I likewise devote myself through the Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father, as my chief good and highest end, as the author of my being, to whom I am obliged in duty; and the felicity of my being, to whom I am obliged in interest. O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant, may I ever be free in thy service, and never desire to be free from it: nail my ear to thy door-post, and let me serve thee for ever."

In the beginning of the year 1701, he performed this great act of religious worship in these words:

"This new-year's day I solemnly renew the dedication of myself unto God, thankfully acknowledging and admiring God's patience and forbearance towards me, that he has continued such a dry and barren tree as I am in his vineyard for so many years, and continued the gifts of his bounty and grace to me; and particularly acknowledging the last year to have been a year of much mercy, especially in the encouragement given to my ministry.

"Lamenting and bewailing my great unfruitfulness, and that I have governed my thoughts, appetites, passions, and words no better; that I have husbanded my time and opportunities no better, and improved so little in knowledge and grace, and done so little to the honour of my great Creator and Redeemer. But,

"Being also more and more confirmed in my belief, of the being and attributes of God, of the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ between God and man, and of the reality and weight of invisible things, and being more and more satisfied that this is the true grace of God wherein I stand, and am resolved in the strength of Christ to stand in it:

"I do solemnly resign and give up my whole self to God in Jesus Christ; I commit my soul and all the concerns of my spiritual state to the grace of God, and to the word of his grace, subjecting myself to the conduct and government of the blessed Spirit, and to his influences and operations, which I earnestly desire and depend upon for the mortifying of my corruptions, the strengthening of my graces, the furnishing of me for every good word and work, and the ripening of me for heaven.

" I commit my body and all the concerns of my outward condition to the providence of God, to be ordered and disposed by the wisdom and will of my heavenly Father; not knowing the things which may befall me this year, I refer myself to God. Whether it shall be my dying year or no, I know not; but it is my earnest expectation and hope, that the Lord Jesus Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or death, by health or sickness, by plenty or poverty, by liberty or restraint, by preaching or silence, by comfort or sorrow. Welcome, welcome the will of God, whatever it be: the Lord give me grace to stand complete in it."

The year following, 1702, he writes thus: " The covenant of grace being a new covenant, because ever new and often to be renewed, I have this new-year's day, early in the morning, while it is yet dark, solemnly renewed it upon my knees; and be it a memorandum indeed, ever remembered and never forgotten.

" Humbly acknowledging my dependence upon God, as my Creator and the Author of my being; my obligations in duty to him as my Sovereign Lord and Ruler, and my engagements in gratitude to him as my Protector and Benefactor; and mentioning with thankfulness the many mercies of my life hitherto, and particularly those of the year past; during which, I have found myself the care of a very kind providence, which has made the steps of my pilgrimage comfortable, which has preserved to me the use of my reason and understanding, limbs and senses; hath continued my liberty and opportunity to exercise my ministry; hath provided plentifully for me and my family, and loaded me daily with his benefits; for all which I praise his name, and for the mediation of Jesus Christ, to which I owe all:

" Acknowledging also, and lamenting the remaining strength of my corruptions, and my bent to backslide from the living God, taking to myself the shame of my many defects and follies, notwithstanding my frequent renewing of my covenant with God, and flying to Christ for righteousness, pardon, and peace.

" I once more bind my soul with a bond to be the Lord's, wholly, and only, and for ever his. Into thy hands, O God, I commit my spirit, to be ruled, cleansed, and sanctified throughout, qualified for thy service in this world, and for the fruition of thee in the other. My body I present to thee a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, for it is my rea-

sonable service. My ministry I devote to thine honour, and the continuance and success of it I submit to thy will. All my worldly comforts I lay at thy feet, to be disposed of as thou plearest. My life itself is thine; O God of my life, my times are in thy hand. Whatever may be the events of this year, let divine grace be sufficient for me to enable me to accommodate myself to the will of God in them, and then nothing can come amiss. If God will be with me, and keep me in the way that I go, throughout the remaining part of my pilgrimage in the world, where I am but a stranger, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, and a heart to love him, and serve him, and live to him, so that I may come at last to my heavenly Father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God, my Lord, and my God for ever. Amen. Halleluiah."

MAT. HENRY.

The next year his renewed covenant has this set over it,
"Looking for the blessed hope;"

And the tenor of it is this:

"This new-year's day I have, in much weakness, and compassed about with many infirmities, upon my knees, made a fresh surrender of myself, my whole self, all I am, all I have, all I can do, to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, my Creator, Owner, Ruler, and Benefactor: all my affections to be ruled by the divine grace, and all my affairs over-ruled by the divine providence, so as I may not come short of glorifying God in this world, and being glorified with him in a better world.

"Confirming and ratifying all former resignations of myself to God, and lamenting all the disagreeableness of my heart and life therewith, and depending upon the merit of the Redeemer to make this and all my other services acceptable, and the grace of the Sanctifier to enable me to make good these engagements, I again bind my soul with a bond to the Lord, and commit myself entirely to him; particularly, as to the events of this year which I am now entering upon, not knowing the things that may abide me in it.

"If this year should be a year of continued health and comfort, I commit myself to the grace of God, to be preserved from carnal security, and to be enabled in a day of prosperity to serve God with joy.

"If my opportunities as a minister should be this year continued, I commit my studies, and ministerial labours at home and abroad, to the blessing of God; having afresh consecrated them all to his service and honour, earnestly desiring mercy of the Lord to be faithful and successful.

"If I should be this year at any time tried with doubts concerning my duty, I commit myself to the divine conduct, with an unbiassed desire, praying to know what God will have me to do, with a fixed resolution by his grace to follow his direction in the integrity of my heart.

"If I should this year be afflicted in my body, family, name, or estate, I commit my all to the divine dispose; the will of the Lord be done; only begging that the grace of God may go along with the providence of God in all my afflictions, to enable me both to bear them well and to use them well.

"If this year I should be disturbed or molested in the exercise of my ministry, if I should be silenced, or otherwise suffer for well doing, I commit the keeping of my soul to God, as to a faithful Creator; depending upon him to guide me in my call to suffer, and to make that clear, and to preserve me from perplexing snares; depending upon him to support and comfort me under my sufferings, and to bring glory to himself out of them; and then welcome his whole will.

"If this year should be my dying year, as perhaps it may be, I commit my spirit into the hands of my Redeemer, to be washed with his blood, and presented in his arms with exceeding joy. My wife and children I commit to him, to be owned, blessed, and preserved by him when I am gone. 'In thee, O Lord, have I put my trust, let me never be ashamed.'

The year following, January 1st, 1704, he goes on in this way of duty and comfort, having now, by long experience, found the advantage of it. His words are,

"Acknowledging my continued dependence upon God, as my Creator, Preserver, and chief Good; and my continued obligations to him in duty, as my Lord and Ruler; and in interest, as my Benefactor and Protector; believing that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him:

"Relying upon the merit, mediation, and everlasting righteousness of my dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who loved me and gave himself for me, as my way to the Father, and the spotless robe wherein alone I can appear before him:

“ And submitting my soul to the operation and influences of the blessed Spirit of grace, without which I am nothing, and can do nothing :

“ Thankfully owning God’s goodness to me the last year, in lengthening out my life, health, comfort in soul, peace, plenty, settlement, relations, liberty, and opportunity ; and admiring his patience, forbearance, long-suffering, in sparing me in his vineyard, who deserved to have been cut down and cast into the fire as a barren tree :

“ Lamenting my foolishness, the foolishness which is still bound up in my heart, and that which still breaks forth in my life ; and particularly, that my improvements in grace and usefulness, last year, did not answer the covenants which began it :

“ Because of all this I make a sure covenant, and write it. In the strength of the grace of Jesus Christ, on which alone I depend to work all my works in me and for me, I covenant for this new year, and for my whole life, to walk closely with God in all holy conversation, to keep my heart with all diligence ; and to thee, O my God, I commit the keeping of it. To take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue ; and do thou set a watch, O Lord, before the door of my lips. I covenant to redeem my time, and to thee, O God, do I consecrate this year and all the hours of it : the Lord enable me to fill it up with good, according as the duty of every day requires. I bind myself to follow the Spirit of God in all my affections, and the providence of God in all my affairs, whatever God shall appoint me to this year ; to health or sickness, to plenty or loss, to evil report or good report, to liberty or restraint, to the house of mourning or the house of rejoicing, to life or death. Behold, here I am, let him do with me as seemeth good in his eyes ; only whatever the providence of God allots for me, let the grace of God be sufficient for me, to enable me to accommodate myself to it ; and then welcome the will of God.”

The year 1705, he begins with this renewed dedication of himself to God.

“ Not renouncing, but repeating and ratifying all my former covenants with God, and lamenting it, that I have not lived up more closely to them ; I do in the beginning of this new year solemnly make a fresh surrender of my self, my whole self, body, soul and spirit, to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, my Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier ; covenanting and promising, not in any strength of my own,

for I am very weak but in the strength of the grace of Jesus Christ, that I will endeavour this year to stand complete in all the will of God.

“ I know this is the will of God, even my sanctification ; Lord, grant that this year I may be more holy, and walk more closely than ever, in all holy conversation. I earnestly desire to be filled with holy thoughts, to be carried out in holy affections, determined by holy aims and intentions, and governed in all my words and actions by holy principles. O that a golden thread of holiness may run through the whole web of this year !

“ I know it is the will of God that I should be useful ; and by his grace I will be so. Lord, thou knowest it is the top of my ambition in this world to do good, and to be serviceable, to the honour of Christ, and the welfare of precious souls. I would fain do good in the pulpit, and good with my pen ; and which I earnestly desire to abound more in, to do good by my common converse. O that the door of my opportunities may be still open, and that my heart may be enlarged with holy zeal and activity for God this year ! and that I may be thoroughly furnished with knowledge, wisdom, and grace for every good word and work.

“ If it be the will of God that this year should be a year of affliction to me, a year of sickness, or reproach, or loss ; if my family should be visited, if my liberties should be cut short, if public troubles should arise, if any calamity should befall me, which I am least apprehensive now, I earnestly desire to submit to the divine disposal : welcome the holy will of God ; let me have God’s favour, and the assurances of that, and by his grace nothing shall come amiss to me.

“ If it be the will of God that I should finish my course this year, let me be found of Christ in peace, and by the grace of God, death shall be welcome to me. My wife, and children, and relations, my congregation, which is very dear to me, my ministry, myself, and my all, I commit to God, whose I am, and whom I desire to serve : let me be the Lord’s only, wholly, and for ever. Amen. The Lord say Amen to it.

“ Jan. 1. 1706. ‘ By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth : ’ and now I begin this new year,

“ 1. Earnestly praying for the graces of the year, with a humble subjection of soul to the blessed Spirit of God, that I may some way or other eminently honour and glorify God.

this year; that I may live this year to better purpose than I lived the last. O that no temptation may so overtake me this year as to overcome me. To the conduct of divine grace, which is, I know, sufficient for me, I here solemnly resign myself, my thoughts, my affections, my will, and all the intents of my heart, to be directed into the right way, and kept and quickened in it: let me this year receive grace for grace.

“2. Patiently waiting for the events of the year, with a humble submission to the holy will of God. I know not what the year shall bring forth; but I know it shall bring forth nothing amiss to me, if God be my God in covenant: if it bring forth death, that, I hope, shall quite finish sin, and free me from it. ‘Lord, let thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word.’ I commit my family to my heavenly Father, to God, even my own God, my father’s God, my children’s God: O pour out thy Spirit upon my seed, thy blessing, that blessing of blessings, upon my offspring, that they may be praising God on the earth when I am praising him in heaven. Amen. Amen.”

He went on in this excellent course of communion with God, and covenanting with him, from year to year; and there is something peculiar in every one, that I cannot easily restrain myself from inserting every transaction of this nature. The year following was thus entered upon by him:

“My own act and deed, through the grace of God, I have made it many a time, and now I make it the first act of this new year, to resign myself afresh unto the Lord, not only for the year ensuing, but for my whole life, and for ever.

“1. To thee, O God, I give up myself, to be used and employed for thee; I desire to live no longer than I may do thee some service. Make what use of me thou pleatest, only let me obtain mercy of the Lord, to be found diligent, humble, and faithful. O that the work of this year may be better done than that of the last, and my time more filled up! and that I may never grow weary of well-doing.

“2. To thee, O God, I give up myself, to be disposed of by thee as thou pleatest. I know not what the year may bring forth to me or to my family, but welcome the holy will of God, and God by his grace make me ready for it: if it be the last year of my life, my dying year, may I but finish my course with joy! Farewell this world; whatever afflic-

tions may this year befall me, I desire none of them may move me from God and my duty."

To his next year's covenant he prefixes that sentence which we have already mentioned to have been the motto of his religious grandfather, Judge Warburton, "Christ is a Christian's all:" this Mr. Henry was willing to make his motto too, Christ is a Christian's all, and he adds, "He is my all." I find a short note in his diary, thus: "On the 18th of September 1702, Jeremy Griffith, an old servant of Judge Warburton's, was with us; he told us, he waited on the Judge when he died, at Polsdon, near Darking in Surry, and that it was in June 1696; that a few minutes before he died he said to his lady, 'The pains of death are hard, but the sting of death is taken out.' I have lately found among their papers some pious meditations of the Judge's own writing."

Having prefixed this motto, Mr. Henry proceeds:

"Unto thee, O blessed Jesus, my only Saviour and Redeemer, do I make a fresh surrender of myself this morning, body, soul, and spirit. To me to live is Christ, particularly this ensuing year.

"All my time, strength, and service I devote to the honour of the Lord Jesus; my studies and all my ministerial labours, and even my common actions; it is my earnest expectation and hope, and I desire it may be my constant aim and endeavour, that Jesus Christ may be magnified in my body.

"In every thing wherein I have to do with God, my entire dependence is upon the Lord Jesus-Christ for strength and righteousness; and whatever I do in word or deed, I desire to do all in his name, to make him my Alpha and Omega; the Anointed of the Lord is the breath of my nostrils, through his hands I desire to receive all my comforts; I have all by him, and I would use all for him.

"If this should prove a year of affliction, a sorrowful year upon any account, I will fetch all my supports and comforts from the Lord Jesus-Christ, and stay myself upon him, his everlasting consolations, and the good hope I have in him through grace.

"And if it should be my dying year, my times and my soul are in the hand of the Lord Jesus; and with a humble reliance upon his mediation, I would venture into another world, looking for the blessed hope; dying as well as living, Jesus Christ will, I trust, be gain and advantage to me.

"Lord, keep this always in the imagination of the thought of my heart, and to establish my way before thee."

It is easy to observe that the tenor of this covenant, which runs so much and so expressly upon Christ in every branch of it, was an enlargement upon that great truth and thought which is made the preface to it, "Christ is the Christian's all."

The next new-year's day, Jan. 1. 1708-9, he writes thus.

"The inscribing of a double year, eight and nine, puts me in mind to look back upon the year past, which I have reason to do with thankfulness for the many mercies with which God has crowned it, and with sorrow and shame for the many sins with which I have blotted it; and to look forward to the year now beginning, which I desire to begin with God.

"My outward concerns as to my health and safety, the prosperity of my affairs, provision for my family, the continuance of my life, and the lives of my relations and friends, comfort in my children and congregation, I have committed and do commit to the conduct and disposal of God's gracious providence, which I depend upon to order every thing for good to me. Here I am, let the Lord do with me what he pleases: that Providence, I trust, shall so order every event, as that nothing shall be an invincible temptation to me to draw me from God and duty in any instance.

"The affairs of my soul, and all the concerns of the spiritual and divine life, these I commit to the special grace of God, which I trust shall be sufficient for me, to enable me to keep a good conscience, to do my duty well as master of a family, and as a minister, to persevere to the end, and to finish well: 'Lord, do not leave me, nor forsake me: I will seek thy precepts, O forsake me not utterly.' The Lord preserve me to his heavenly kingdom. Amen. Amen."

The year after began with the Lord's day, and the sacrament day, on which he has left it upon record:

"Early this morning I have afresh resigned myself unto the Lord, rejoicing in the prospect of an opportunity this day to ratify this resignation at the table of the Lord, and to begin the year with that solemnity; but ashamed and sorrowing that my heart is so cold and weak in doing it.

"1. What this year may bring forth I know not, but as to that I refer myself entirely to the divine Providence; let the Lord deal with me and my family as seemeth good unto

him; he hath dealt very graciously with me, I have received much good at his hand, and if he should give me any bitter cup to drink of, should I not receive that also? Many of my friends died the last year, perhaps this year it may be my turn: Father, thy will be done in all things.

“2. What I may this year bring forth is my great care, what fruit unto God: if the Lord let me alone this year also in his vineyard, he will come seeking fruit, but from him is my fruit found: nor can I bring forth fruit unless I abide in Christ; and therefore, whatever opportunities I may have of doing or getting good, I depend upon the grace of God to enable me to improve them, and to do the works of the year in the year. I depend upon that grace to enable me to go on with my present services, both in my study and in my ministerial work; and if I should be called out to any duties or sufferings unforeseen, I depend upon the grace of God to strengthen me for them, and in every thing to guide my way. O that my children may live before God! O that the congregation might flourish this year more than ever! The Lord strengthen the things that remain among us that are ready to die.”

The year following, viz. 1711, he thus addresses himself to God, in the anniversary consecration of himself and his all to him.

“Finding my God still gracious, but my own heart still treacherous, I desire this morning early, the beginning of the new year, to devote myself afresh unto the Lord. O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant, and I earnestly desire that, I may do thee more and better service this year than I did the last, and than I have done any year yet, that the longer I live the better I may be.

“What work I have to do for thee this year, O my God, I depend upon thy grace thoroughly to furnish me for it, and to work all my works in me; particularly to assist me in the great work of my Expositions, that I may write nothing that is frivolous or foreign, nothing that is foolish or flat, that may give just offence, or lead into any mistakes; but that all may be clear, and pertinent, and affecting; that I may find out genuine expositions, useful observations, profitable matter, and acceptable words, if it shall please God to spare me to go on with it.

“What troubles and afflictions may befall me this year, I depend upon the grace of God to sanctify them to me, and

to enable me to bear them like a Christian, and to honour God under them.

“ Whatever my temptations may be, I depend upon divine grace to discover them to me, to arm me against them, and to save me from being overcome by them.

“ The great care of this year which I foresee, concerning my invitation to Hackney, I cast upon God, as I have done many a time, depending upon him to issue it for the best, either to lead me on in it, or bring me off from it, which will be most for his glory, and with satisfaction and reputation to myself.

“ And if this should be my dying year, as perhaps it may, I depend upon the grace of God to make me ready for another world, and to receive me to glory, that whenever my Lord shall come, I may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. Amen.”

His next new-year's day found him removed to Hackney, 1712, and there he went on in the same way of waiting on the Lord, and walking closely with him, and began the year with this solemn act of self-dedication to God.

“ Firmly believing, that my times are in God's hand, I here submit myself and all my affairs for the ensuing year to the wise and gracious disposal of the divine Providence; whether God appoint for me health or sickness, peace or trouble, comforts or crosses, life or death, his holy will be done.

“ Believing that my heart is in God's hand, this precious soul of mine I commit to the conduct of the divine grace, and submit to the influences and operations of the blessed Spirit, to be wrought up to a conformity to the will of God in every thing. I depend upon God to give me a wise and an understanding heart for all the services that I may be called out unto, and from him I hope to obtain mercy to be found faithful.

“ The sphere of my usefulness is much enlarged, O that my heart may be proportionally enlarged; and as the day is, so let the wisdom, and strength, and grace be. Temptations to spiritual pride are many, O that the grace of God may be sufficient for me, to keep me humble, very humble; to keep up in me always a humble sense of my own unworthiness, weakness, and many follies and infirmities, and a humble dependence upon the Lord Jesus Christ, as all in all, both for righteousness and strength.”

Mr. Henry lived but to see one other new-year's day before he exchanged time for eternity; that dying year that he had so long been looking for, so often speaking of, and so se-

riously providing for, laying up a stock of prayers, and committing his precious soul with so much solemnity to Christ against that time, it was now come; and at the beginning of it, Jan. 1. 1714, he makes the last annual surrender of himself to God in these terms:

“Reflecting with thankfulness upon the many mercies of the year past, a good measure of health, and not above four or five fits of the stone in the whole year; health in my family, encouragement in my ministry, both in the congregation here and at London, the comforts of my journey to Chester, the happy settlement of the congregation there, the continuance of the public tranquility, and I trust, through grace, some sweet communion with God in his ordinances, and some progress heavenwards, and my work pleasant to me:

“Reflecting with sorrow and shame upon my manifold defects and shortcomings in holy duties; and at other times inward impressions, not always answering to outward expressions; having begged for pardon in the blood of Christ:

“I this morning renew the dedication of myself to God, my own self, my whole self, body, soul and spirit. Father, I give thee my heart, use me for thy glory this year, employ me in thy service, ‘fit me for thy will.’ If it should be a year of sickness and pain; if a year of family affliction; if a year of public trouble; if of silencing and suffering, bonds and banishment; ‘if it be my dying year,’ welcome the holy will of God: if a year of continued health, peace and liberty; Lord I desire to be busy in the improvement of it, both in studying and preaching in an entire dependence upon divine grace, without which I am nothing, and can do nothing.”

This was the last new-year’s-day, and this the solemn transaction that passed that day, very early in the morning, between God and his own soul: when this was done, he preached that day a sermon to young people, from Prov. xxiii. 26. “My son, give me thy heart;” on the mentioning whereof in his diary, he affectionately adds, ‘Blessed Lord, take my heart, such as it is, and make it such as it should be;’ afterwards he read the life of the Rev. Mr. Trosse of Exon, which he observes to be a wonder of the freeness and of the power of the grace of God in Christ.

This large account I have given of Mr. Henry’s frequent and solemn covenanting with God, I need not ask the reader’s pardon for; if any part of this narrative be acceptable and useful, I promise myself it will be this. What impressions it

may make upon those that read it, I know not; what impressions it has made upon my own mind in writing it, I know and feel; God grant they may be effectual and abiding.

I have mentioned these secret workings of Mr. Henry's soul towards God, both in prayer, observation, reflection and self-dedication, as those proper and excellent means, which he constantly used, to keep up a holy zeal for God, and activity and unwearied diligence in his service. To have such memorials always lying between God and his own soul, must needs keep him close to duty, and make him lively and zealous in duty; and that they had this good effect, the tenor of his exemplary life has fully demonstrated, and thereby recommended it to us all, that if we would approve ourselves good and faithful servants, we should go and do likewise.

I have a great deal of reason to believe, that these secret memoirs were never designed by Mr. Henry to be made public; the matter of them, and the manner in which he has written them down, make it very evident they were only to be witnesses betwixt God and his soul; and some may be ready to blame me, as having trespassed too much upon these religious privacies of my dear deceased friend; but the apparent tendency they have to excite and quicken us all to greater spirituality and diligence in duty, is a consideration that has overruled every thing else with me, and I think it ought to do so.

CHAP. VI.

His removal from Chester to Hackney; his great Acceptation, Industry and Success there, and in the City and Suburbs of London; his last Journey to Chester; his Death and Burial.

WE are now come to take a view of Mr. Henry in the last part of his life, from his removal from Chester, where he lived about twenty-five years, to his removal out of this world, after he had spent a little more than two years at Hackney.

These last years of his life, though few, produced various occurrences, which were matter of great concern and thoughtfulness to him, and none so much as his leaving Chester; which though at length he was satisfied it was fit for him to do, yet it was with great difficulty to himself, as well as to his people there that he determined it.

As no minister that I know was ever more esteemed and loved by his people, so I believe they must themselves own, few ministers ever gave their people more full proof of his love and faithfulness to them: I have already observed, that he had not been once absent from them on their monthly sacrament for twenty-four years, which is indeed a very extraordinary instance both of God's providential care over him, and his pastoral care over the people.

Though Mr. Henry had lived in London before his coming to Chester, and had contracted there a very honourable acquaintance, and had an invitation before he left London to have settled there, as has been already mentioned; yet he was so far from hankering after the advantages of that place, that for eleven years after he fixed at Chester, he never so much as took a journey to London, to visit his relations and friends there; the first journey of this sort was in May 1698, and this he did not undertake without due concern and consideration.

A few days before he set forward, I find him calling some of his friends together, to recommend that intended journey to God in prayer; and as his own words are, 'Blessing God that we are not forced from home, nor going down to follow a roving fancy, or to seek our fortune.' And the day after, when several of his kind and dear friends had been taking leave of him, he writes, 'Had I not now laid myself under engagements to go on with this journey, my heart would have failed me, purely out of a lothness to be so long absent from my family and flock.'

He set out from Chester on Monday the 2d of May, with these thoughts, as expressed in his diary, 'I am now setting out for my journey in health; but I know not what a day, much less what a month may bring forth, I desire to stand complete in all the will of God; it is much my comfort, now I am going this journey, that I can in faith desire God to go along with me, and it is my earnest desire that I may have his presence.'

That day he preached at Nantwich, from Matth. v. 25. and went on in the evening to Newcastle, and the next morning preached there to a numerous and attentive auditory, from Matth. xxii. 5. and went from thence to Litchfield that night, and the next morning from Litchfield to Sutton-Colefield, a place which he was the more willing to see for the sake of the eminent Mr. Anthony Burgess, who had laboured so much among them.

Here he met some ministers from Birmingham and from Coventry, who had been employed the day before at Birmingham in the ordination of Mr. Letherland, Mr. Iremonger and Mr. Carver, a good day's service to the church of God: and here Mr. Henry writes, 'I was surpris'd at the request of Mr. T. and those with him, that I would preach a sermon to them at the meeting house at Sutton-Colefield, but God graciously assisted me to speak a word in season, from Psal. xxii. 30. "A seed shall serve him, and it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." We dined in the same town, with Mr. Stephenson, a gentleman who had been high sheriff of the county the year before, and entertained us very generously.'

The same night he went forwards to Coventry, having thus preached for three days together while he was upon his journey; his friend Mr. T. went along with him to London; the journey was safe and comfortable. Mr. Henry has inserted in his diary the pleasure he had in making a short visit at St. Albans to the Rev. Mr. Grew, nephew to Dr. Grew, of whom he truly observes, 'That he was a grave, serious man; entertained us with very good discourse, and shewed us many mathematical curiosities.'

He has observed, That many of the country ministers happened at this time to meet at London, Mr. Owen from Olvestre, Mr. Finch from Norwich, Mr. Porter of Alcafter, Mr. Henry Chandler, and that Mr. Boyse from Ireland came to town the night before. He expresses a very great satisfaction in seeing and hearing both the ministers that lived in London, and those that were then providentially there.

His first service he thought due to his old friend and tutor, Mr. Doolittle: there he preached on the Lord's day morning, to a very great auditory; and in the afternoon at Mr. Quick's, with whom he spent the evening. In his diary he has left this note, 'I have not been in any pulpit on a Lord's day, but my own and my father's, these ten years till to-day.'

He preached almost every day, and his preaching was very much taken notice of, and followed from place to place, especially a sermon he preached at a fast kept at the excellent Mr. How's from Acts xxviii. 22. 'A sect everywhere spoken against.' He complains of himself, and the discomposure he was under at that time, but no one else perceived it; the discourse gave universal satisfaction. He observes, that he had

sweet communion with God in joining with Mr. Shower that day in prayer. After this Mr. Henry's name, that had not before been unknown in London, was better known and more esteemed and remembered than ever.

The next year God called up the learned and every way excellent Dr. Bates to the spirits of just men made perfect. Hackney had for many years been happy in his ministry : those of the established church envied the Dissenters the honour of having one among them, that would have filled and adorned the best of their Episcopal sees. Upon his death, the first person that was thought fit to succeed him, was Mr. Matthew Henry ; it was unanimously agreed, that an invitation should be given him, and Mr. Shower was desired to prepare him for it by a letter, which he did, urging him with great affection and respect to hearken to it. He returned his answer to Mr. Shower the very next post, in which he wholly declined it, and desired no further solicitation might be made to him about it ; and in his diary he avers, ' That the stress of his refusal was truly laid upon his great affection for the people at Chester.'

The congregation at Hackney did not immediately desist from what their hearts were much set upon, but themselves sent up a letter of invitation in very pressing terms, which, in a few days time, Mr. Henry answered with great respect, but plainly and fully in the negative, which I think put an end to all further importunity on their part. God provided well for them ; Mr. Billio, a very prudent, pious man, of great humility and good temper, and a very profitable preacher, was peaceably chosen ; and lived about thirteen years with them in great usefulness and comfort.

There was now no vacancy in any considerable congregation in London, but the people had their eye and desire upon Mr. Henry. In the year 1702, May the 5th, I find this note in his diary : ' Having this day Mr. Nathaniel Taylor's book against Dr. Sherlock, I immediately received a letter from Sir Henry Ashurst, that Mr. Taylor was dead ; it has much surprised and affected me. He was a man of great worth, wit and courage, not much elder than myself. On the 21st of June, I received and read Mr. Shower's sermon on Mr. Nathaniel Taylor's funeral, which is very affecting.'

The peremptory refusal that Mr. Henry had given to the congregation at Hackney, discouraged that of Salter's-hall from making any attempts of that nature ; and Mr. Chorley of Norwich was chosen, but he declined it ; and there being

still some disputes among them about the choice of another, it was proposed to them, to give Mr. Henry an invitation; and accordingly letters were written to him by Mr. How, Mr. Williams, and Dr. Hamilton, urging this among other arguments, That there being contests, both sides would agree in him. These letters gave Mr. Henry many serious thoughts, and some uneasy ones. On the 6th of October he writes, 'I have had a letter to-day from Mr. How, Mr. Williams and Dr. Hamilton, about my invitation to Salter's-hall; I desire to know the mind of God. Had we an oracle to consult, I could refer to the divine determination with so great an indifference, that if it were referred to me, I would refer it back to God again.'

On the 12th of the same month, thus: 'This day about a dozen of our congregation have been with me together, to desire me that I would not leave them. I assured them I had once and again given a denial to this invitation; that I could not tell what might happen hereafter, but that it was my present purpose not to leave them.'

In his review of this year, which, according to his manner he made at the end of it, he has this remark: "The most considerable occurrence of this year, as to myself, has been my invitation to the congregation at Salter's-hall, which was a surprise to me. I begged of God to keep me from being lifted up with pride by it: I sought of God a right way. Had I consulted either my own fancy, which had always a kindness for London ever since I knew it, or the wordly advantage of my family, I had closed with it; and I was sometimes tempted to think it might open me a door of greater usefulness; and tho' I think ministers married to their ministry, yet I cannot see any scripture-ground to think they are married to their people. I had also reason to think that Mr. John Evans might have been had here, and might have been more acceptable to some, and more useful than I; but I had not courage to break through the opposition of the affections of my friends here to me, and mine own to them, nor to venture upon a new and unknown place and work, which I feared myself unfit for. It has been looked upon as the honour of ministers to continue in the same place, notwithstanding temptations to remove. I bless God I am well satisfied in what I did in that matter, though it was once and again a sudden resolve. If ever it pleases God to call me from this place, I depend upon him to make my way clear. Lord lead me in a plain path.'

In the year 1704, Mr. Henry took another journey to London, and Mrs. Henry with him: her two sisters were then in town, and the eldest under great and threatening indispositions, which was the occasion of their coming up. Many of his friends and brethren longed to see him, and some of them sent him word so. On the 14th of February he writes: 'I have this day received a letter from Mr. T. earnestly inviting me to make a journey to London this spring, which confirms my purpose of it; and more because last night in prayer, I particularly uttered the matter before the Lord.' On the 31st of March; 'We fought the Lord by solemn prayer for his presence with us in our journey, and I trust we shall have an answer of prayer.'

On April 3d, they began their journey. Mr. Henry's note in his papers is: 'We took leave of many of our friends, and committed ourselves and ours to God. This is but a small journey compared with what many are compelled to make in business, war, or the like; but it seems great to us, who abide so much by the stuff. We have reason, with Zebulon, to rejoice in our tents, as well as others in their going out.'

On the 6th, near Northampton, they were in some danger by the extreme badness of the ways: the Warrington coach that was with them was laid fast; 'But (says he) our God is the God of the hills and of the vallies, at home and abroad, our powerful Protector, and bountiful Benefactor.'

'On the 7th we set out early from Northampton. It is easy to leave an inn, why should it not be easy to leave this world; which is but an inn, to go to our home, our Father's house? The troubles of travelling exercise our patience and submission to God's will; by submission in lesser things we learn it in greater; but they also give us to experience the goodness of God in our preservation, and encourage us to hope in that goodness in our journey to heaven.'

'On the 8th, from Dunstable safe and well to London, our going out and coming in preserved. The next day, being the Lord's-day, I heard Mr. How in the morning, from Jude 21. Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life; and must never forget what he said in the close of the sermon, 'I would deal for your souls as for my own, and for myself; I declare before you all, I depend upon the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ for eternal life.'

In the afternoon of the same day, Mr. Henry preached at Salter's-hall, from Prov. xvi. 16. 'How much better is it to get wisdom than gold?' After Mr. Henry had visited many friends, preached many sermons, and assisted at several fasts, he returned home by the month's end, very welcome to his friends at Chester, and most affectionately remembered by his friends at London.

Some few years before this, the congregation at Chester had built a new meeting-house very decent and commodious; and in the year 1706, Mr. Jonathan Harvey, who had for some time kept up the lesser meeting, which was his father's, now finding himself declining in his health, and meeting with some difficulties about the place of worship, thought fit to desist from preaching in Chester: upon which the greatest part of his congregation fell in with Mr. Henry, and made a considerable addition to him; insomuch that the next year they were obliged to build a gallery. And now they were above 360 communicants, and had much comfort and unanimity among them; for which he expresses his great thankfulness to God.

In the year 1708, died the eminently learned and upright, and every way valuable, Mr. John Spademan, fellow-labourer with the reverend Mr. How, who knew how to prize him. Upon the first notice Mr. Henry had of his death, which was in the month of September, he expresses a very great sense of the loss the church of God had sustained, and that congregation, in the death of such men as Mr. How and Mr. Spademan, and cries, 'Help, Lord, for the standard-bearers fail; those few learned men we have, God is removing, what will he do with us?'

On the 18th of February 1709, Mr. Henry received a letter from London, that the congregation, late Mr. How's, had chosen him to succeed Mr. Spademan and to be compastor with Mr. Roswell; and on the 21st he had a letter from the congregation, and an intimation given, that some of them designed to come down to Chester. This was followed with many other letters from ministers and gentlemen, to press his acceptance of this call, from the argument of the greater good of the church of God.

These importunate applications from so many hands, gave him a great deal of concern and trouble. He always discouraged the proposal, and declined it. He desired that none of them would by any means give themselves the trouble of

a journey to Chester. His friends there shewed a very tender concern at the mention of his remove, which he has put a special remark upon, and blesses God for his interest in their love: and yet he owns he was sometimes in suspense; and on the 26th of March, he says, 'This day I wrote to Mr. Rosewell's congregation, to desire them to acquiesce in my purpose to continue here: my kindness for my place and people herein, prevails above my judgment, interest, and inclination.

Letters passed for some months between London and Chester about this affair; but Mr. Henry could not prevail with himself at that time to break through the importunity of his friends at Chester; and at length God provided well for the congregation at Silver-street from another quarter.

But these many invitations that Mr. Henry had to London, seemed to intimate, that he was one time or other to be removed thither: and in the next year, 1710, about Midsummer, he was again invited to the congregation at Hackney, upon the much-lamented death of good Mr. Billio. A very particular account of that transaction, and his determination upon it, I shall give you under his own hand, in two papers.

One was written 1711, at Chester, and gives us the narrative of his invitation, and his thoughts and purposes upon it, thus:

'About Midsummer 1710, I had a letter from the congregation at Hackney, signifying to me, that they had unanimously chosen me to be their minister, in the room of Mr. Billio, who was lately dead of the small-pox, and to desire that I would accept their invitation; in prosecution of which they told me, I should find them as the importunate widow, that would have no Nay. I several times denied them. At length they wrote to me, that some of them would come down hither: to prevent which, I being not unwilling to take a London journey in the interval between my 3d and 4th, Vol. I wrote them word I would come up to them; and did so in the middle of July; but was down again before the first Lord's-day in August. Then I laid myself open to the temptation by increasing my acquaintance in the city.

'They followed me, after I came down, with letters to me and to the congregation. In October I wrote to them, that if they would stay for me till next spring, (which I was in hopes they would not have done), I would come up and make a longer stay for mutual trial. They wrote to me they would wait till then.

‘ In May 1711, I went to them, and staid till the end of July; and before I parted with them, signified to them my acceptance of their invitation, and my purpose to come to them, God willing, the spring following. The ministers there had many of them given it under their hands, that they thought it advisable, and for greater good, and a more extensive usefulness, that I should remove to Hackney.

‘ However, I was determined to deny them at Hackney; and had denied them, but that Mr. Gunston, Mr. Smith, and some others came to me from London, and begged of me, for the sake of the public, that I would not deny them; which was the thing that turned the scales. I never had been, till this journey, so much as one first Lord’s-day of the month out of Chester, since I came to it, twenty-four years ago.

‘ By this determination I have brought upon myself more grief and care and concern than I could have imagined, and have many a time wished it undone again; but having opened my mouth, I could not go back. I did with the utmost impartiality (if I know any thing of myself) beg of God to incline my heart that way which would be most for his glory; and I trust I have a good conscience, willing to be found in the way of my duty: wherein I have done amiss the Lord forgive me for Jesus sake, and make this change concerning the congregation, to work for good to it.’

The other paper was written at Hackney, July 13th, 1711, and contains the reasons of his remove, thus: ‘ Having this morning (as often, very often before) begged of God to give me wisdom, sincerity and humility, and to direct my thoughts and counsels, now this important affair must at last be determined, I think it meet, having before set down the reasons for my continuing at Chester, now to set down the reasons which may induce me to accept this invitation to Hackney, that it may be a satisfaction to me afterwards, to review upon what grounds I went, and may be a testimony for me, that I did not do it rashly.

‘ 1. I am abundantly satisfied that it is lawful for ministers to remove, and in many cases highly expedient and necessary to the edifying of the church; and this not only for the avoiding of evil, as in the case of persecution, which can be a reason no longer than while the persecution lasts, or of the uncomfortable disposition of the people, but for the attaining of a greater good, and the putting of a minister into a larger sphere of usefulness. This has always been my judgment,

according to the word of God ; and I have practised accordingly, in being often active to remove other ministers, which I have afterwards had satisfaction in : and this has been the judgment of the congregation at Chester, between whom and their ministers there have never been those solemn mutual engagements that have been between some other ministers and their congregations, nor any bond, but that of love.

‘ 2. My invitation to Hackney is not only unanimous, but very pressing and importunate ; and the people here, in waiting so long for my determination, and in the great affection and respect they have shewed to my ministry since I came among them, have given the most satisfying proof of the sincerity and zeal of their invitation. And upon many weeks trial, I do not perceive any thing in the congregation that is discouraging, but every thing that promiseth to make a minister’s life both comfortable and useful.

‘ 3. There seems to be something of an intimation of providence in the many calls I have had this way before, and particularly to this place upon the death of Dr. Bates, though I never either directly or indirectly sought them, but, on the contrary, did what I could to prevent them, and this particularly.

‘ 4. There is manifestly a much wider door of opportunity to do good opened to me here at London than is at Chester, in respect to the frequency and variety of week-day occasions of preaching, and the great numbers of the auditors ; the prospect I have of improving these opportunities, and doing good to souls thereby, is, I confess, the main inducement to me to think of removing hither ; and what I have seen while I have been here now, has very much encouraged my expectations of that kind.

‘ 5. In drawing up and publishing my Expositions, and any other of my endeavours for the public service, I foresee it will be a great convenience to me to be near the press, and to have the inspection of it, and also to have books at hand that I may have occasion for in the prosecution of my studies, and learned men to converse with for my own improvement in knowledge, and to consult with upon any difficulty that may occur.

‘ 6. I have followed Providence in this affair, and to the conduct of that I have (if I know my own heart) in sincerity referred myself, hoping and praying both myself, and my friends for me, that God would guide me with his eye, and

lead me in a plain path. When I was purposing to send a final denial, Providence so ordered it, that the very post before I had a letter subscribed by divers of the London ministers, persuading me to accept this call; whereupon I wrote to them that I would come to them six months upon trial, thinking that they would not have consented to be kept so long in suspense, but it proved they did; and so I have been drawn step by step to this resolution, and though I have industriously fought, I have not found any on this side to break the treaty.

‘ 7. I have asked the advice of ministers, upon a fair representation of the case, which I drew up; and many, upon consideration had of it, have given it under their hands, that they think it adviseable for me to remove, and none of them have advised me to the contrary, but have told me, I am myself the most proper judge of it. Many private Christians also in London, and some that seem to me to be the most judicious and public-spirited, have, by letters, when I was in Chester, and by word of mouth here, persuaded me to accept of this call, as judging that, by the blessing of God, I might be useful here to that degree as to balance the inconveniency of my leaving Chester; nay, that even here I might, in many respects, be serviceable to the country.

‘ 8. I have some reason to hope that my poor endeavours in the ministry may, by the blessing of God, be more useful now to those to whom they are new than to those who have been so long used to them, and so constantly, with whom also I trust another hand may do more good, as mine did, by the grace of God, in the first seven years of my being there: and I have known many congregations from whom ministers have removed, and those to whom it has created the greatest uneasiness and discontent for the present, which yet have afterwards been so well settled beyond their own expectations under other ministers, that they have flourished even more than ever they had done before.

‘ 9. Though the people of Chester are a most loving people, and many of them have had, and have an exceeding value for me and my ministry, yet I have not been without my discouragements there, and those such as have tempted me to think that my work in that place has been in a great measure done; many that have been catechised with us, and many that have been long communicants with us, have left us, and very few have been added to us.

' 10. Whereas I have been thought to have been useful in the country by my preaching, as God has enabled me, in many places about ; I have now reason to think that though I should continue at Chester, I should be quite taken off from that part of my work, having found as I came up, and once before, that riding long journies and preaching brought an illness upon me, which I was never till the last winter visited with, so that my service would be confined wholly within the walls of Chester ; whereas here, by divine assistance, I might do a great deal of work of that kind without that toil and peril.

' 11. The congregation at Chester, though it cannot be expected they should consent to part with a minister they have so long had a satisfaction in, yet have been pleased under their hands to leave it to my own conscience and affection. Now, as to my own conscience, upon a long and serious consideration of the matter, (and, if I know my own heart, an impartial one), and after many prayers to God for direction, I am fully satisfied that I may lawfully remove, and that there is a prospect of my being more useful if I do remove, and therefore it is expedient that I should : and as to my affections, though they are very strong towards Chester, yet I think they ought to be over-ruled by my judgment.'

Notwithstanding all this caution with which Mr Henry had proceeded, and all the reasons upon which he had determined this affair, his removal from Chester proved a very hard task to him, and pressed down his spirit beyond measure ; the day before he left that place was the Lord's day, May 11. 1712, on which he writes, ' A very sad day ! O that by the sadness of their countenances and mine, our hearts may be made better. I expounded the last chapter of Joshua in the morning, and the last of Matthew in the afternoon, and preached from 1 Theff. iv. 17, 18. " We shall be for ever with the Lord, Wherefore comfort one another with these words." I see I have been unkind to the congregation who love me too well.

' On the 12th, in much heaviness I set out in the coach for London, not knowing the things that shall befall me there : on the 15th we came to London, lodged at Mrs Scott's, kindly entertained, my brother Hilton with me. But, Lord, am I in my way ? I look back with sorrow for leaving Chester, I look forward with fear ; but unto thee, O Lord, do I look up.'

On the 18th, which was the Lord's day, he began his stated pastoral work at Hackney. In the morning he expounded the 1st of Genesis, in the afternoon the 1st of Matthew, beginning the world as it were anew, and preached from Acts xvi. 9. "Come over to Macedonia, and help us;" on which he writes, 'An encouraging auditory, O that good may be done to precious souls! but I am sad in spirit, lamenting my departure from my friends in Chester; and yet if they be well provided for I shall be easy, whatever discouragements I may meet with here.'

His Lord's-day work he managed at Hackney in the same method as he had done at Chester, only that instead of beginning with the 100th psalm, he begun with a short prayer; for the rest the order was the same, and I must refer the reader to the account of it that has been already given.

Though his natural strength was abated, and distempers growing upon him, yet he abated nothing of his wonted zeal and diligence, either on the Lord's-day or lecture-days, in expounding, preaching, or catechising; he kept his usual hour of beginning public worship, and though it was earlier than the congregation at Hackney had been accustomed to come together; yet he was punctual to the time, and they soon came to it, and that without reluctance, and were many of them well pleased with it; and thus he did in the afternoon as well as in the morning.

He made it plainly to appear he sought not his ease and pleasure in coming up to London; here was a large field of service, and he had a large heart, and on that account the place suited him very well. He has more than once preached the Lord's-day morning lecture at Little St. Hellen's, and then returned to Hackney, and preached and expounded as usual both parts of the day there; sometimes, after having preached morning and afternoon at Hackney, he has gone to Mr Lloyd's meeting-house in Wapping, to the charity-school at Shakespeare's Walk, and sometimes over the water to Redriff, and preached the evening lecture, and returned home, and gone through the several parts of family-worship as usual.

Some weeks he has been employed in preaching lectures every day in the week, and sometimes twice or thrice on the same days. Indeed if ever any minister in our days erred in excess of labours, he was the person; but he would never be persuaded to remit any thing of his diligence, nor did he care to be much pressed on that point, as if he had a secret hint

given him that the time of his departure was at hand; his motion in holiness and service was the swifter as he came nearer to the centre of his rest.

He had much comfort in some sermons that he preached in Hackney not long after his coming among them, from Matth. xvi. 26. "For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" He finished that subject Oct. 12, 1712, and with pleasure understood by many that they were much affected with it, and they hoped much edified by it; and some of them said, they were resolved they would never pursue the world so eagerly as they had done.

Besides his catechising in Hackney on Saturdays, which he set up in the beginning of July; the second month after his coming thither, he was not long after invited to undertake a catechetical lecture in London; some serious Christians came over to Hackney on purpose to propose this to him, and though it was the exercise that he took a peculiar pleasure in, yet, such was his humility and respect for his brethren, the ministers in London, that he would not give a positive answer till he had first consulted them about it; they all heartily approved of it, and several ministers of both denominations sent their sons to it, and often attended upon it themselves.

Mr Wilcox's meeting-house was the place first mentioned, and Mr Henry was well pleased with that situation, both as being more out of the noise, and the place where Mr Doolittle, his old acquaintance and tutor, had faithfully ministered for many years, and particularly in the work of catechising. The Rev. Mr Shower was very earnest with him to have accepted of his place for this work, but he declined it; 'for (says he) Mr Wilcox's people spoke first, and I chuse it because a more private place; the Lord grant it may turn to his glory.'

This useful lecture was kept on Tuesdays in the evening; his method was very proper and plain; it was very well attended, and every thing managed with great decency and order, according to the method of his Scripture Catechism, though with some variation; and I have reason to believe it was of great use both to the catechumens themselves, and to many others that constantly attended upon it.

Every one that was acquainted with Mr Henry knows that he had a very tender concern for the souls of young persons, and was very desirous that they might be furnished with

all proper means of instruction in the knowledge of God. I have a paper drawn up by him about charity-schools; he was much pleased with those that were already set up, and was very desirous more of this kind might be done. The paper which he left in my hands is this:

‘ It is humbly proposed that some endeavours may be used to form and maintain charity-schools among the Dissenters both in city and country, for the teaching of poor children to read and write, &c. and to cloath them, and teach them the Assembly’s Catechism. It is thought adviseable, and not impracticable.

‘ 1. It is thought adviseable; for,

(1.) It is in itself a very good work; it will civilize the poor of the nation, and promote the knowledge of God among them, and tend to make the other means of knowledge more effectual. How much evil may, by the blessing of God, hereby be prevented, and how much good may hereby be laid a foundation for!

‘ (2.) The established church hath set us a good example of it; many persons of rank and figure are engaged in it, and great sums have been contributed to it: their zeal should provoke us, and thus it becomes us to fulfil all righteousness.

‘ (3.) It is certain that the church of England hath gained and will gain by these charity-schools great advantage against the Dissenters, and gain it in a way that appears creditable and honourable. The gentry of the nation have generally left the Dissenters, the men of business are kept from them by the sacramental test, and the charity-schools will carry off the poor of the nation; and then to what purpose is it to breed up ministers, when in one age there may be few or no people to attend them?

‘ If the cause of the Dissenters be a just and justifiable cause, we ought to use all just and justifiable methods to support it; to which, as the case now stands, this seems highly necessary, and it is better late than never; though the ground that has been lost should not be retrieved, yet what remains may, by the blessing of God, be kept.

‘ (4.) It is complained of (how justly I know not) that many who are bred in the public charity-schools discover a great enmity to the Dissenters. It is therefore desirable that some should be bred up among us, who should be taught, on the contrary, to have and express great charity and moderation towards those of the public establishment, and so to overcome evil with good.

' (5.) Such a work of general usefulness, done in a right manner, would be very much for the credit of the Dissenters, and recommend them to the good opinion of the nation.

' (6.) It would be in many places an encouragement to Dissenting ministers, to have such a number of young people willingly attending their ministry, and to have an opportunity, if it be needful, of catechising and instructing them publicly in the ways of God.

' (7.) The allowance for the teaching of these charity-schools would be something of a help and maintenance to such poor scholars and ministers, as, for want of better encouragement, would willingly undertake such a service.

' 2. It is thought to be practicable. Though never any good work was attempted, but it met with difficulties, yet it is hoped the difficulties that may attend this will not prove insuperable.

' *Quest.* (1.) Will they not presently be suppressed?
Answer,

' 1. There is no such law against teaching to read and write, as there is against teaching grammar-schools, and keeping academies without a license.

' 2. It is so good a work that it will be no credit to any one to oppose it, especially if such places be chosen where there is no such on a public foot, and if they be managed with prudence and temper.

' 3. It is but trying; if the attempt be not made, it is our fault; if it be made and crushed, it is other people's.

' *Quest.* (2.) How will the expence be maintained? *Answer,*

' 1. Who can tell how God may open the hearts and hands of people for so good a work?

' 2. Many Dissenters who now contribute to the public charity-schools, perhaps, because there is no other, would chuse to turn the stream into this channel if it were but once opened.

' 3. It may be, some of the established church, though they would not contribute to the maintenance of our ministers, yet would, out of respect to poor children, give something to these charity-schools.

' 4. Some charities left at discretion might perhaps be applied this way very much to satisfaction; since the helping of young people into the world, and the fitting them to be useful in it, is accounted by all as good a work as any whatsoever.

' 5. It is good to trust Providence in the way of our duty, which sometimes wonderfully appears; and there has seemed

of late a great disposition in many good people, in and about the great city, to promote this good work, and something beyond expectation has been already done in it.'

I am very sensible what a disposition there is in those that condemn our dissent from the church of England to put a severe construction upon every thing we say and do; and perhaps this proposal may meet with the like treatment: but I think it carries so much weight in it, that I could not persuade myself to suppress it, hoping it will come into many hands who will have the heart to make a good use of it, and will pursue the design which this wise and good man had so much at heart. And indeed he did not satisfy himself to speak or write for it only, but, having the disposition of a considerable sum of money left by an honourable friend of his, he ordered twenty pounds to be paid to one of these charity-schools, which they have accordingly received, and go on in the good design with great success.

While Mr. Henry was thus every way laying out himself for the good of souls, both of young and old, in and about London, his spirit was much afflicted with the thoughts of their unsettled state at Chester. Mr. Blackmore at Worcester was first invited to succeed him; but after the matter had depended a good while, and the desires and expectations of the people at Chester were raised to a great height, he could not prevail with himself to remove to them. Then they applied themselves to Mr. Aldred of Eccles in Lancashire; but, after much deliberation, neither could he see his way clear. These disappointments gave Mr. Henry a great deal of trouble, and cost him many tears and prayers; at length God provided wonderfully well for them. Mr. Gardner and Mr. Withington are labouring among them in the word and doctrine with universal acceptance, and we hope may be continued in their usefulness for many years, building upon the good foundation that has been laid by those master-builders that have gone before them.

Mr. Henry had so many calls to preach at London and in the suburbs, that he seems sometimes in his diary to excuse it to himself that he was so often engaged. On the 15th of January 1712, on the Lord's day, I find this note; 'I went in the evening to open an evening-lecture near Shadwel-church, and preached from Psal. lxxiii. 28. I hope, through grace, I can say, the reason why I am so much in my work is, be-

cause the love of Christ constrains me, and I find by experience it is good for me to draw near to God.'

One Tuesday evening as he was coming from his catechistical exercise, March 3, 1713, he fell into the hands of robbers within half a mile of Hackney: they took from him about ten or eleven shillings; upon which he makes these remarks: '1. What reason have I to be thankful to God, that having travelled so much, yet I was never robbed before now. 2. What abundance of evil this love of money is the root of, that four men should venture their lives and souls for about half a crown a-piece. 3. See the power of Satan working in the children of disobedience. 4. The vanity of worldly wealth, how soon we may be stripped of it, how loose we ought to sit to it.'

In the month of July 1713, on the 20th day he set out on his journey for Chester; for when he left them he promised, while he was able, to come down once a-year, and spend some sabbaths with them; and this his friends at Hackney not only consented to, but, if I mistake not, they were the first that proposed it. On this journey he writes:

'I am now set out in the coach for Chester to visit my friends in the country, as I purposed and promised when I came hither, aiming at God's glory, and the edification of some souls; in prospect of that, the charge and trouble of the journey shall be as nothing to me.

'On the 23d we came to Whitchurch, a very wet day, but many of my friends met me there, to my great reviving; in the afternoon I went and preached at Broad-Oak, from Rom. i. 11. "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end you may be established." The next day I went to Chester, where my friends received me with much affection and respect, so that I could not but say, it was worth the while to come. On the Lord's day preached from 1 Tim. vi. 12. "Lay hold of eternal life." It was very pleasant to me to preach in the old place, where I have often met with God, and been owned by him: on the Wednesday we kept a congregational fast, the next Lord's day preached and administered the Lord's supper to my beloved flock, a great congregation. On Monday went to Middlewich, preached a lecture there from Matth. xxiv. 12. "Iniquity abounds;" the next day to Knutsford to a meeting of ministers, I preached from Col. ii. 8. "Though

absent in the flesh, yet present in the spirit," about the spiritual communion of saints.

' On the Lord's day, Aug. 9. preached at Chester, from Tit. ii. 13. " Looking for the blessed hope." I took an affectionate farewell of many of my friends, prayed with many of them; the next day set out from Chester with much ado for Nantwich, where Mr. Mottershed is well settled; preached from Josh. i. 5, 6. " As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: be strong, and of a good courage:" from thence that night to Wrenbury Wood, and preached from John i. 48. and from thence to Danford, and preached at Whitchurch from 1 Pet. v. 10. and took my leave of my dear friends there, and went into the coach alone, came to London the 15th, and found my tabernacle in peace.'

The next day, being the Lord's day, he preached twice as usual, and administered the Lord's supper: but the next day complained of great weariness and sleepiness; and upon consulting Sir Richard Blackmore, perceived some symptoms of a diabetes, which obliged him the next Lord's day to keep house, the doctor absolutely forbidding his going out; on which he writes, ' A melancholy day, and yet not without some communion with God; perhaps I have been inordinately desirous to be at my study and work again.'

By the blessing of God, upon advice and means, this distemper went off in a few days time; the next Lord's day he went on in his public work, and says, ' Blessed be my God, who carried me through it with ease and pleasure.'

The next month, Sept. 20. the Lord's day, he had a sharp fit of the stone, but went through the work of the day; that evening and the day after he voided several pretty large stones, and yet the next day went to London to his catechising, and on Wednesday preached the lecture at Hackney, and on Thursday evening preached the evening lecture at Spittlefields, and on Friday joined in a fast at Mr Flemming's at Founders-hall, and there preached, and on Saturday writes, ' I bless God I have now my health well again.'

The painful distemper still had its returns: on the 13th of December, on the Lord's day morning, soon after midnight, he was seized with another fit of the stone; but, says he, ' Blessed be God the pain went off in about an hour's time: though fatigued with it, yet the poor body fitted in some measure to serve the Lord. I went to London, preached the morning-lecture at St. Helen's, from John xx. 1. " The

first day of the week early while it was yet dark ;” and then returned to Hackney, and went through the sabbath work there, blessed be God for help from on high.’

The Thursday after he had another fit, and very violent ; concerning which he gives this account : ‘ I went to my study very early in the morning ; but before seven o’clock I was seized with a fit of the stone, which held me all day, pained and sick ; I lay much on the bed, but had comfort in lifting up my heart to God, and pleading his promises, and encouraging myself in him ; about five o’clock in the evening I had ease, about ten I voided a large stone ; though my God caused grief, yet he had compassion.’ On the next day he writes, ‘ Very well to-day, though very ill yesterday ; how is this life counterchanged ? and yet I am but girding on my harness ; the Lord prepare me for the next fit, and the Lord prepare me for the last fit.’

We are now come to his last year, which he entered upon with his usual zeal and diligence. He expresses a particular satisfaction that his three nephews, Mess. Hardware, Tyllston, and Radford, were at the Lord’s table with him the first sabbath in the new-year.

He takes notice the next month of the death of his good friend Alderman Powel, of whom he says, he was an excellent Christian, and of great experience, and died very comfortably.

And the next month, March 20. he has with more than ordinary concern of mind recorded, That, ‘ Mr Collins, co-pastor with Mr Brague, and one of the lecturers of Pinner’s-Hall, a serious, holy person, aged, I suppose, somewhat above forty, preached his turn the last Tuesday lecture, and was here in Hackney yesterday, with Mr. Powel, about some of his uncle’s charities, and dined at Mr Lydes, prayed with Mrs. Lydes, and went home between three and four in the evening. Some young men of the congregation used to meet at his house for prayer and religious conference ; he went to his study, and ordered to be called when they came : his maid, after some time, went and told him they were come, he answered, ‘ He would come to them presently ;’ was heard to unlock his study door, and come out, but immediately fell down dead. This providence is very affecting to me.’ It is very remarkable, that when he was going out of Mrs. Lydes’ chamber, who was then in a dying condition, he turned again, and desired the servant to tell her mistress he should soon meet

her in heaven; and about ten days after, March 29, that good gentlewoman finished her course in her sleep.

The beginning of this year Mr. Henry's diary is very full of expressions of fear and concern about public affairs; he had very dark apprehensions: the bill against the Dissenters' schools he looked upon not only as a very great grievance in itself, but as leading to further severities. It was on this occasion that he preached an excellent sermon, May 26, at Mr. Bush's meeting-place, from 2 Chron. xx. 12. "Neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee." This was but the week before he took his last journey to Chester, from which God had determined that he should return to us no more.

The 30th of May, being the Lord's day, he chose to administer the Lord's supper, as a good preparation for his journey, and the best way of parting with his friends at Hackney. That day he expounded in the 38th of Exodus in the morning, and in the 7th of Luke in the afternoon; and preached from Rev. v. 9. "For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." This was his last sabbath in Hackney, the providence of God having ordered it so, that he must go down into Cheshire and die in the midst of his old friends there.

On Monday the last of May he took coach for Chester; some of us went out at the same time for Coventry, and at St. Albans we parted with him, the Chester coach going longer stages than we could perform; we did not think it would have been our long and last farewell, but it proved to be so: as far as I can learn he bore the journey well. In a letter to Mrs. Henry, dated June the 7th, he says, 'He is well, that his friends tell him, he seems to them to be better than he was when with them the last year;' and expresses his great joy at Mr. Gardner's settlement among them, and his performances with them. As he parted with his friends at Hackney at the Lord's table, so he met his old friends at Chester at the same place; it was their sacrament-day, they had a full communion, none of the congregation gone off. And he adds, 'If none have left it while it was unsettled, I hope none will leave it now it is so well settled.'

On Tuesday, June the 8th, he went to Wrexham, and preached there; and says, He returned that night to Chester, not at all tired, but thought fit to drink some bottles of Bristol waters, to prevent the return of his diabetes of which he seemed to have some apprehension.

On the 14th he went to Grainge, to his brother Warburton's, and from thence to Knutsford; Mr. Gardner went with him; where he met several ministers, and went from thence on Tuesday evening to Chowbent in Lancashire, and returned to Chester on the Wednesday, and did not perceive himself to be wearied: but some of his friends thought he prejudiced his health by riding so many miles in so short a time, and by his labours in every place where he came. He complained of the heat of the weather, and says, 'It makes me almost as faint and feeble as I was when I came up last.' By which I conclude he had some return of his diabetes: for he immediately adds, 'If God bring me home in safety, I believe it will do well to use the means I did last year, unless the return of the cool weather should make it needless; for when I am in the air I am best.' He writes, 'Though I am here among my old friends, yet I find my new ones lie very near my heart, among whom God has now cut out my work.'

On the 19th, the last letter Mrs. Henry received from him, he writes, That he had taken the coach for Wednesday next, which was June 23, designed to go into it at Whitchurch, and was pleased that he was to have the company of Mr. Yates of Whitchurch; and desires, that since the Wednesday after his coming up, would be in course their quarterly fast at Hackney, care might be taken to engage the help of some of the ministers.

Such was his concern, that his Master's work might go on, and suffer no interruption or disappointment by his absence. The next day, which was the Lord's day, he spent at Chester; and it was the last sabbath he enjoyed on earth: God was pleased so to order it, that he should spend his last in that place, and among that people where he had spent so many comfortable and heavenly sabbaths for above four-and-twenty years together. And I cannot let it pass without a particular observation, that the two last sabbaths he spent on earth, God should direct him to a subject so suitable to what he had appointed, and was so speedily to be performed for him. Those two sabbaths he was wholly taken up with the thoughts of that eternal sabbath and rest which the spirits of just men enjoy in heaven. The last sabbath but one he preached from Heb. iv. 9. "There remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God:" and the last of all from the first verse of the same chapter, "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us

of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

There seems to be so much of the finger of God in pointing to such a subject as this, that I cannot but think it must be every body's desire to know how his thoughts were employed about it; and therefore I shall give the reader an abstract of his sermons on both these texts, and have only this to desire of him, that while he reads them, he would carry it in his mind, that his heavenly sabbath and rest was the point his soul was aiming at, with more than common desire and care, but a few days and hours before he arrived there. In the former discourse you may discern the high thoughts and estimation he had of that rest; in the latter his conscientious care, and deep concern, that neither himself nor his hearers should come short of it.

Heb. iv. 9. "There remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God."

Sabbatismos, The keeping of the sabbath.

' A literal sabbath, designed to be observed in the gospel church.

' 2. A spiritual sabbath, designed to be enjoyed by all believers. Security and serenity, Psal. cxvi. 7. Isa. xxxii. 17.

' 3. An eternal sabbath remains for the people of God.

' Doct. The happiness of heaven is the constant keeping of a Sabbath.

' Shew, 1. Heaven is a sabbath.

' 1. This is to make those that love sabbaths long for heaven.

' 2. To make those that long for heaven love sabbaths.

' 1. The appointment of this happiness is like the institution of the sabbath.

' 2. The enjoyment of it is like the keeping of a sabbath.

' For the first. Let us see wherein Heaven is like a sabbath, dictum domus Eliæ.

' 1. The sabbath is a divine appointment, and so is heaven.

' The day which the Lord has made, Psal. cxviii. 24.

' Which he has revealed, Neh. ix. 14.

' So heaven, 'tis of God's preparing, the house which the Lord has built, Heb. viii. 2.

' And which he has revealed, 2 Tim. i. 11.

' God would glorify himself to the utmost, 'tis opus Deus dignum.

' After the heavens and the earth were finished.

- ' 2. The sabbath is an ancient appointment.
- ' 'Twas from the beginning, Gen. ii. 1, 2.
- ' The Jews have a saying, That the sabbath and paradise were made before the world.
- ' Heaven was so, Matth. xxv. 34.
- ' The preparation made, long in preparing.
- ' The persons chosen for heaven is a society of persons. A city consists of citizens; these incorporated in the divine church, Heb. xii. 23.
- ' 3. The sabbath was made for man, Mark ii. 22. For the benefit and comfort of man; for man's ease, honour, and advantage, in keeping up communion with his Maker.
- ' So heaven is said to be "prepared for you," Matth. xxv. 34. whereas hell is said to be "prepared for the devil and his angels."
- ' 4. The sabbath is a lasting appointment, the other feasts of the Lord were not so.
- ' Present comforts are expiring, but heavenly comforts are durable. The sabbath was out of the six days of the creation; so heaven will survive all God's other work's; when heaven and earth are in another sense finished, 2 Pet. iii. 7. 13.
- ' For the 2d. The keeping of a sabbath is the happiness of heaven.
- ' (1.) The sabbath is a day of rest, and Heaven is an everlasting rest. This is principally intended. The sabbath is a rest after labour; "Six days shalt thou labour," i. e. in our work, the work assigned us; so heaven is rest after labour. We must labour in this world, and then enter into rest, Eccl. v. 12. Works that follow, Rev. xiv. 13. It is a holy rest; a rest that God calls us into. He calls us sometimes into a desert to rest a while, Mark vi. 31. but into a paradise to rest for ever. Under the law, the servants and cattle were to rest, Deut. v. 14. And in heaven the creature will rest from the vanity it groans under, Rom. viii. 19. 'Tis rest by consent. All Israel rested on the sabbath day; as they did together in Canaan. Heaven is a sabbath-rest: for,
- ' 1. It perfectly frees us from all remainders of sin and corruption; as Israel, when they went out of Egypt, were freed from the bondage. Sin is a tyranny, a drudgery: no toil after your spiritual warfare, Rom. vii. 24.
- ' 2. It puts us out of the reach of Satan's temptations. That land has rest from war, as the rest given to David from all his enemies round about: it is the church's rest.

' 3. It dischargeth us from all the toils and troubles of this present world : none of them there ; no weariness in our callings ; no sweat of our face, but an entire rest from all pain and sickness, &c.

' 4. It easeth us of all the hardships that attend us in the service of God. Our work for God and our souls is now done with much difficulty ; " the flesh is weak ; " but in heaven the body is made spiritual. That is the true sabbatical year, of which that under the law was an emblem, when land brought forth of itself, not tilled or torn.

' 5. It reposeth the soul in God. The sabbath is a rest in God. The satisfaction of the soul consists in a relation to God and interest in him. Holy souls, when brought to the vision and fruition of God, say, " This is my rest for ever."

' (2.) The sabbath is a day of joy ; it is more than rest. Psal. cxviii. 24. " This is the day which the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad therein." And heaven is joy : but more particularly,

' 1. Every thing is there that is joyful. God reconciled, pleased, communicating himself as on the sabbath in that world which is light. 'Tis the joy of our Lord, Matth. xxv. 21.

' 2. Every thing in the soul that disposes it to be joyful, love to God, satisfaction in itself, it has what it would have.

' 3. Nothing to damp this joy, Isa. xxv. 6. No grieving thorn without or within ; no melancholy prospect.

' (3.) The sabbath is a day of praise. God has the glory, when we have the comfort. Now in heaven.

' 1. We shall see more than ever, and therefore shall praise more ; shall look further than ever into the mysteries of redeeming love.

' 2. We shall have richer and fuller communications of divine grace than ever before. We shall be abundantly satisfied.

' 3. We shall love more than ever. That heavenly fire will flame in everlasting thanksgivings ; never go out : " Rest not day or night, saying, Holy, holy, holy," Rev. iv. 8.

' (4.) The sabbath is a memorial, so is heaven. In keeping the sabbath, there is a commemoration of the creation of the world, and the resurrection of Christ ; and to the Israelites a commemoration of their deliverance out of Egypt. And the happiness of the saints in heaven will consist as much in the remembrance of what is past, as

their holiness, now, in the prospect of what is to come. Son remember, will be as pleasing a peal in heaven, as it will be a dreadful one in hell.

‘ (5.) The sabbath is a day of communion with God; it was designed so to our first parents; to Israel; it is designed so to us, to be a day of converse and correspondence; like post-day, letters go out and come in: A day when God communicates himself to his people. And what is heaven but this communion in perfection? God manifesting himself to them, they manifesting themselves to him.

‘ (6.) The sabbath is a holy convocation. The people of God met together on sabbath-days, Acts xx. 7. In heaven there will be a general assembly of all God’s spiritual Israel, Luke xiii. 29. all that ever were, or are, or ever shall be, they shall be gathered to Christ, 2 Thess. ii. 1.

‘ 2. Shew. That the keeping of the sabbath in heaven will be much better, and more comfortable, than keeping sabbaths on earth. It is good to be here, but better there: For,

‘ 1. Here we are at a distance from God, there we are brought near to him; now absent from the Lord, then present, 2 Cor. v. 6, 8. Here we have a sabbath now and then in the camp; there a constant one in the court: here boarded out at school; there fetched home to our father’s house.

‘ 2. Here we are in the dark and under a veil, but there we shall see all things clearly: here we enquire in God’s temple; but after all our enquiries, our discoveries are short and defective; we know but in part. The word we read and hear is in many places obscure to us, but there the veil will be rent; doubts resolved: we shall see all things clearly, 1 Cor. xiii. 9.

‘ 3. Here we are dull, defective in our best performances; but there we shall be all light, and love as well as light. Now we cannot do the good we would, are disturbed with vain thoughts, distractions, sabbath-work done by halves, through the vanity of our minds, and the infirmity of the flesh. The body is a clog; but there will be no corrupt nature, no body of sin, no body of flesh, no flaws in our work.

‘ 4. Here we are often disquieted and in sorrow; we have other work to do besides that of joy and praise. We repent now in tears; hang our harps on the willow-trees; we go on mourning; enemies mock at our sabbaths, our spiritual enemies, Lam. i. 7. But there will be nothing but joy and praise, all pleasant.

‘ 5. Here we lose a great part of our sabbath time unavoidably, but there will be none lost in heaven, Rev. iv. 8. We lose a great deal in the morning in sleep; but from the morning of the resurrection we shall never sleep nor need it; in dressing, but there always drest; in going to the assembly, but there going no more out; in bodily refreshments, no eating and drinking there.

‘ 6. Here our sabbath-assemblies are but small and mixed, but there full and perfectly pure. Here we meet with a few, the doors shut for fear of the Jews, those of our own neighbourhood; but in heaven, all from the east and the west; here those of our own age and day, there Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; here there are spots, none there; all saints, and all the saints, and saints made perfect; no unclean person or thing, a perfect concert, and not a jarring string.

‘ 7. Sabbaths here are but signs; that sabbath is the substance, and has in it all the thing signified. God gave his sabbaths for signs, Exod. xxxiv. 13. tokens of his favour; but in heaven he gives his favour itself, the full communication of it. It is but a typical rest we have here, that is a real rest, a sabbath indeed.

‘ 8. Sabbaths here have nights at the end of them, and week days to come after them; but that is an everlasting sabbath. As Christ is a priest, so heaven is a sabbath that hath no successor. That rest is perpetual, and we shall never return to our toil; that work is continual, and we shall never return to our sleep or inactivity.

‘ These are short sabbaths, soon over, and we must go down from the mount; our solemn assemblies must disperse. For the application,

‘ 1. Then we have reason to call the sabbath of the Lord honourable, and to honour it, Isa. lviii. 13; for when the scripture would set forth the glory and happiness of heaven itself, it speaks of it as the keeping of a sabbath. The Jews called the sabbath the queen of days; let us put a difference between sabbath-time and other time; call it not only the Lord’s day, the Lord Christ’s day, one of the days of the Son of man, but call it one of the days of heaven.

‘ 2. Then those are very unfit for heaven that say, When will the sabbath be gone? that are weary of it, snuff at it, call it a weariness, Mal. i. 13. Heaven would be no heaven to such, they cannot truly desire it, but ignorantly; they know not what the day of the Lord is.

' 3. Since this sabbatism remains for the people of God, let us make it sure that we are God's people. I have preached as if we were all going to this sabbath, but is it so? Are there not many of you who have no part or lot in this matter? Let us therefore fear. What will become of you if you be not God's people? Is heaven everlasting rest? hell is everlasting pain and torment.

' 4. Let this quicken and engage us to the great duty of sabbath sanctification.

' [1.] Let us take pleasure in sanctifying the sabbath; see that work to be its own wages, a heaven upon earth. Shall we call that a task and a drudgery which is now the employment of the upper world, and we hope will be ours in the future state? Say, It is good to be here, Psal. lxxxiv. 1, 10.; bid the sabbath welcome, relish your pleasures of the sabbath, and you will despise other delights.

' [2.] Take pains in sabbath-sanctification; the excellency of the work should engage us to the utmost industry in it. Let us not trifle when we are working for heaven, let us stir up ourselves and all that is within us, Psal. ciii. 1. The sabbath-day should be the busiest day in the week; it requires pains, it deserves it, and will recompense it.

' [3.] Take a pattern in sabbath-sanctification by the heavenly work. Keep sabbaths as near as we can to what they do it.

' (1.) Fill up sabbath-time: though we cannot be constantly employed, we may be more than we are; go from duty to duty.

' (2.) Stand clear from the world, and the things of it. They in heaven are got quite above it, let us keep it out as much as may be, be dead to it.

' (3.) Keep in a chearful frame. It is a feast of the Lord, and a feast was made for laughter; this is an antitode to vain mirth.

' (4.) Keep close to the communion of saints. Christian sabbaths are spent in solemn assemblies; there God promiseth his presence.

' (5.) Be much in praise. Do not crowd this work into a corner, in secret, in your families only; it is a thanksgiving day.

' (4.) Let this comfort and encourage us in reference to the difficulties and discouragements we groan under in our

sabbath work ; there remaineth the keeping of a sabbath where there will be no complaints.

‘ (1.) We complain that we can do but a little sabbath-work, but there we shall do a great deal.

‘ (2.) That what we do we cannot do as we would, but there “ we shall mount up with wings like eagles, run and not be weary, walk and not faint.”

On the 20th of June, his last sabbath, he pursued this excellent subject with a serious caution, from Heb. iv. 1. “ Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.”

‘ Two things prescribed here in order to our entering into this spiritual and eternal rest.

1st, Faith in the promise of it.

‘ 2dly, Fear lest we come short of it.

‘ 1st, Faith in the promise of it, a promise that is left us ; we must deal upon trust. Left us ; it is almost the word that is used, v. 9. there remaineth, &c. ; it is left us as a legacy, that we might live upon the hopes of it : live by faith.

‘ Note, There is a great promise of eternal life left us, which we must act faith upon, and act in every thing by that faith.

‘ 1. Thank God that there is such a promise left us. The promise of that, more valuable than the possession of all the world, Psal. lx. 6.

‘ 2. Take hold of that promise, fast hold, 1 Tim. vi. 12. This is my portion : I put in for a share, a place in Canaan.

‘ 3. Take up with it as your felicity ; let me enter into this rest, I will say, “ The lines are fallen well to me.”

‘ 4. Take up with nothing short of it, rest not content with the world’s false and flattering promises.

‘ 5. Think nothing too much to do, too hard to suffer, or too dear to part with, in pursuit of this promised rest.

‘ 6. Trust to this promise, and take comfort from it at all times ; in all conditions. Keep Canaan in your eye, both for your direction and for your encouragement through the difficulties of this wilderness. See how the patriarchs by faith eyed this promise, Heb. xi. though not so clearly revealed as to us now. Cast not away this promise, or despise it.

‘ 2dly, Fear lest we come short of it.

‘ Doct. A holy confidence in God’s promise must be accompanied with a holy diffidence of ourselves and our own sufficiency. They that hope for heaven must fear lest they come short, or seem to come short.

' Shew, 1st, What this fear is which must be kept up.

' 1. There is a fear that is necessary to the beginning of this good work ; the fear of sinners, Isa. xxiii. 17. Jude, v. 23. Fear lest I perish in my sinful state. Lot must be frightened out of Sodom.

' 2. There is a fear that is an enemy to the going on of this work, arising from hard thoughts of God, low thoughts of Christ, producing amazement, 1 Pet. iii. 7. slavish fear, Luke i. 74, 75. ; shake thyself from this yoke.

' 3. But this is a fear that is of great use and service to us in our Christian course, Prov. xxviii. 14. and necessary to our perseverance in it, Jer. xxxii. 40. ; a fear that is to be excited and kept up by proper considerations ; as,

' (1.) The apostle puts himself in, Let us, for he had not yet attained, Philip. ii. 13. and used this means of perseverance, 1 Cor. ix. 1. though he had so great an assurance.

' (2.) The duty is required from every one of us, Let us fear, let us jointly fear, and do all we can to make one another cautious.

' (3.) We must fear for one another, not lest we, but lest any of us should miss it : any of us that have made such a conversion to Christianity, and such a proficiency in it. Now, what is this fear ?

' 1. It is a holy concern about our souls and eternity, as things of the utmost weight and importance, as those that carry treasures in a dangerous road.

' 2. A holy jealousy of ourselves : we do not distrust Christ, but distrust ourselves ; Lord, is it I ? lest I should be a cast-away, lest I should be deceived in myself ; * this will keep us from security.

' 3. A holy caution against sin ; let us be always afraid of sin, as that which disturbs our present rest, and disfits for eternal rest, and forfeits it ; afraid of its baits, start from them ; afraid of its hooks, startle at them.

' 4. A holy dread of the wrath of God, and all those arguments against sin, which are proper to work upon fear. Adam in innocency was awed with a threatening ; Christ was heard in that he feared.

' 5. A holy trembling at the consequences of drawing back. We must be continually afraid lest we should go back, and what will become of us if we backslide ? how dear will it cost us ?

' Shew, 2d, What we must be afraid of; afraid lest we come short of Canaan, as Israel did; we are upon our good behaviour.

' Let us fear lest we come short, as the runner of his prize or gaol. Think how sad it will be if we come short.

' (1.) We to whom the promise is left; shall we lose our legacy for want of claiming it, we to whom God had such kind designs.

' (2.) We that think we have laid hold of the promise, shall we so foolishly lose our hold, and act so inconsistently with ourselves.

' (3.) We that have kept our hold hitherto, what, shall we come short, and suffer all that to perish which we have done! Lest we come short of what was proposed to us, and of what we expected, we come short of heaven, lest we seem to come short.

' 1. That we may not come short indeed, let us take heed of every thing that looks like it, or leads to it; no looking back, no hankering after Egypt, or as Lot's wife; go not with those that look back.

' 2. Though we should not come short indeed, that's not enough; we not so much as seem to come short, Take heed,

' (1.) Of every thing that blemisheth the profession of our Christianity, so that it seems to wither. We seem to be otherwise than we have seemed to be, otherwise than when we set out; or as they that leave their first love, the love of their espousals.

' 2. Of every thing that weakens the evidence of it to ourselves; lest we seem to ourselves to come short, and so to walk in darkness and discourage ourselves.

' To conclude, 1. Let us fear as to the land and nation, brought out of the Egypt of Popery, fear lest we go back to Egypt again.

' 2. As to the state of our own souls.'

The next day he left his friends at Chester, and set forward for his family and people at Hackney. He thought he had found very sensible relief from his journey to Knutsford and Lancashire, which encouraged him to make an appointment of preaching at Nantwich that day in his way to London. He was observed by all his friends to be very heavy and sleepy; but being asked how he did, he always replied, Well. Mr. Sudlow an apothecary, and very good friend of his, said, before he left Chester, they should never see him again. As

he went by Dudden he drank a glass of the mineral waters there. Before he came to Torperly his horse stumbled in a dirty hole, and threw him; he was a little wet, but said he had no hurt, nor felt any inconvenience from his fall. Those that were with him pressed him to alight at Torperly, but he would go on to Nantwich, and there he preached; but the want of his usual liveliness was taken notice of by all. He preached from Jer. xxxi. 18. "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus, Thou hast chastised me," &c. After sermon he dined, and he was advised to lose a little blood for fear of any inconvenience from the fall, though he made no complaints; after bleeding he fell asleep, and his friends fearing he slept too long, awakened him, which was not so pleasing to him.

His old intimate friend Mr. Illidge was then with him, and had been desired by the Hon. Sir Thomas Delves and his lady to invite him to Doddington, and he had fully intended to have waited on them, and there steward was there with Mr. Illidge to have conducted him to a house that has been famed for impartial and disinterested religion, and I hope will be ever so, but he was not able to proceed any further: he went to bed at Mr. Mottershed's house, and said to his friends, 'Pray for me, for now I cannot pray for myself.' When they were putting him to bed he spoke of the excellency of spiritual comforts in a time of need, and blessed God that he had those comforts. He had said to Mr. Illidge, 'You have been used to take notice of the sayings of dying men: this is mine, "That a life spent in the service of God and communion with him, is the most comfortable and pleasant life that any one can live in this world."' He had but a restless night. About five o'clock in the morning he was seized with what the doctors agreed to be an apoplectic fit: he lay speechless with his eyes fixed, and about eight o'clock on Tuesday morning, June 22, he breathed out his precious soul into the hands of Christ. The physicians could not impute his death to his fall, from which he had along said he felt no ill consequence.

A near relation of his, who, for his piety and learning, was very much esteemed by Mr. Henry, writes on this occasion: 'I believe it was most agreeable to him to have so short a passage from his work to his reward, and why should we envy him? It is glorious to die in the service of so great

and good a master, who, we are sure, will not let any of his servants, or any of theirs, lose by him.'

On Thursday before the precious remains were removed from Nantwich to be interred at Trinity-church in Chester, the Rev. Mr. Reynolds of Shewsbury preached an excellent sermon on the sad occasion, which is printed; and the day before, Mr. Acton, minister to the Baptist congregation, had taken very particular and respectful notice of the great loss the church of God had sustained. The ministers at Chester could not be silent on such an occasion; Mr. Withington made a suitable discourse to the providence, both on Thursday and on the Lord's-day morning, and Mr. Gardner in the afternoon, from 2 Kings ii. 13. "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." The bearers at the funeral were Mr. Doughty, Mr. Woods, Mr. Murrey, Mr. Gardner, Mr. Benyon, and Mr. Mottershed. When they came to Chester they were met by eight of the clergy, ten coaches, and a great appearance on horseback; many dissenting ministers followed the mourners. An universal respect was paid to him by persons of note and distinction on all sides. He was buried in Trinity-church in Chester, where the remains of some very dear relations of his had been before laid, in the very place of which he had said two and twenty years ago, 'Perhaps this grave may be next opened for me; the Lord make me ready, and grant that I may be found so doing.' A year after that, one and twenty years before he died, his daughter Mary was laid in that grave; 'The fourth (he says) that have been buried there within this year; two of my brother Hardware's children and two of mine. The Lord prepare me for that cold and silent grave.'

Though Mr. Henry's death was sudden, we have all the reason in the world to believe it was no surprise to him. You find him often in his diary taking notice of the sudden deaths of many of his acquaintance, and always with some suitable ejaculation that he might be always ready, and that he might be found in God's way and work: and he was that "blessed servant whom his Lord, when he came, found so doing."

He had for the greatest part of his life enjoyed a good measure of health. After his entrance into the ministry we seldom find him under any great indisposition of body; we must except the small-pox and a dangerous fever that he was seized with in the year 1704, of which I think it worth the while to give a more particular account. That year, on the 27th

of August, the Lord's day, in reading the chapter in the morning he suddenly fainted away but soon recovered himself and went on with his work : on which he writes, ' A fever is coming upon me, let me be found ready whenever my Lord comes.'

Though after this he had a bad night, restless, burning and sweating, yet having appointed a journey, he went to Nantwich, which afterwards proved his mount Nebo, and preached there from Psal. cx. 3. " Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." And then, says he, ' I was well.'

The next day he went forward to Haslington-chapel, and by the consent of Mr. Egerton rector of Bartumley, he there preached the funeral-sermon of Mr. Cope, an aged faithful minister, who, by the favour of the honourable family of Crew Offley, had for some years spent his time and pains there. Mr. Cope had desired that Mr. Henry should preach there on that occasion ; and he did so (as he says) to a great congregation, the last that is like to be ever there of the Dissenters. He preached from Zech. i. 5. " Your fathers, where are they ? and the prophets, do they live for ever ?"

After his return home his fever prevailed, and he was forced to take his chamber, and was confined to it the Lord's day after, which he says was the first time he had been hindered from his sabbath work since he had the small-pox fifteen years before. This fever held him above three weeks, and yet he has put it down in his diary, that excepting one morning, he had been enabled both to light the lamps and burn the incense ; that is, expound and pray in his family every morning and every evening. He was very desirous to have gone to the solemn assembly before his physicians would give leave, and when it would not be allowed, in some concern he called his family together, and said, ' Well, if I must not go the house of God, I will go to the God of the house.'

The first time Mr. Henry went out of his doors after this illness was on the lecture-day, where young Mr. Harvey preached, and he prayed. On this he says, ' I was willing to go thither first where I most desire to be, I would take the first opportunity of paying my vows.'

Though Mr. Henry's constitution was very healthful and strong, yet there is a great deal of reason to believe he put too much upon it ; and that not only by his frequent and very fervent preaching, in which he used to sweat profusely, but chiefly by his sitting so long together in his study, and

writing so much; this stopped the due circulation of the blood and spirits, and caused an obesity of body and flushing in his face: but his study was more to him than the palaces of princes, and his work was his most pleasant recreation.

When the news of his death reached London, it is not to be expressed how great and universal a concern and sorrow it occasioned both in city and suburbs. I need not say how deep a wound it gave to those of his own family; it is fresh and bleeding still. The congregation at Hackney gave full proof of the value and affection they had for him: I think there was hardly a pulpit of the Dissenters in London but what gave notice of the great breach that was made upon the church of God. Every sermon was a funeral-sermon for Mr. Henry, he was universally lamented; and those who are no friends to the Nonconformists readily acknowledged, that we had lost one that was an honour and support to our weak and despised interest.

But we have not wholly lost him, he has left something of himself, his excellent spirit behind him: he has dropped a valuable mantle, and happy are they that are thoroughly possessed of it. His works praise him in the gate, and by them, he being dead, yet speaketh.

And I shall conclude these memoirs with a brief account of his printed books, in which he enjoys a sort of immortality here, and the church of God possesses an invaluable treasure.

1. The first time he appeared in print was a small Discourse concerning the Nature of Schism. This was published in the year 1689, in which he enquires what that sin is, that the word of God calls schism; and from all the places in Scripture where that word is found, he makes it to appear that it signifies uncharitableness and alienation of affection among Christians, and judges there may be a schism where there is no separate communion, and there may be a separate communion where there is no schism. This was quarrelled with, once and again, in a very odd manner, but defended by a friend of his, who persuaded him to make it public.

2. The next thing he published was his Father's Life. After he had collected some materials for it, he would gladly have had Mr. James Owen to have composed them, and sent them out into the world; but Mr. Owen knew him so well, that he thought none so fit to do it as himself, and prevailed with him to go through with it, which he did in the year 1696; and I may venture to say, nothing of that nature

ever met with better acceptance, or ever deserved it better. The son was happy in having such a subject to write upon; the father happy in having a son, that knew so well how to do justice to his father's merit and memory.

3. After this he published A Discourse about Meekness and Quietness of Spirit, on 1 Pet. iii. 4. to which is added, A Sermon preached at Mr. How's meeting-house in London; shewing the Christian religion is not a sect, and yet that it is every where spoken against. These were published in the year 1698.

4. A Scripture Catechism, in the method of that of the Assembly's; in which the general answer is divided into several propositions, and a proper text of Scripture added to every particular answer, for the proof of it. 1702.

5. Family Hymns, gathered mostly out of David's Psalms, and other places of the inspired writings. 1702.

6. A plain Catechism for Children; to which is added, another for the instruction of those that are to be admitted to the Lord's supper; composed at the desire of some of his brethren in the country, by whose opinion he governed himself in that matter. 1702.

7. A Sermon concerning the right Management of friendly Visits. Preached at Mr. How's meeting-house in London. 1704.

8. A church in the House. Preached at Mr. Shower's meeting, and published at the request of the congregation. 1704.

9. The Communicant's Companion; or, Instructions and Helps for the right receiving of the Lord's supper. Many divines have done very worthily upon this subject, but, I believe, most will say he has excelled them all. 1704.

10. Four discourses against Vices and Immorality, viz.

1. Against Drunkenness. 2. Against Uncleaness. 3. Against Sabbath-breaking. 4. Against profane Speaking. 1705.

11. A Sermon on the Death of the Rev. Mr. James Owen of Salop. 1706.

12. Great Britain's present Hopes and Joys opened, in two sermons; the former on the national thanksgiving-day, December 31, 1706, the latter the day following, being new-year's day, Psal. lxx. 11.

13. England's Hopes. A sermon preached Jan. 1, 1706-7.

14. A Sermon preached at Broad-Oak, June 4, 1707, on

occasion of the death of Mrs. Katharine Henry, relict of Mr. Philip Henry.

15. Two Funeral-sermons; one on Dr. Samuel Benyon, the other on the Rev. Mr. Francis Tallents, ministers of the gospel in Shewsbury, with an account of their lives. 1709.

16. A Method for Prayer; with Scripture expressions proper to be used under each head. 1710.

17. A Sermon concerning the Work and Success of the Ministry. 1710.

18. Disputes reviewed. A sermon preached at the evening lecture on the Lord's day, from Mark ix. 33. 1710.

19. Faith in Christ inferred from Faith in God. A sermon preached on the Tuesday's lecture at Salter's-hall, from John xiv. 1. 1710.

20. A Sermon concerning the Forgiveness of Sin as a Debt, on Matth. vi. 12. 1711.

21. Hope and Fear balanced, in a lecture at Salter's-hall, July 24. 1711.

22. A Sermon at the Funeral of Mr. Samuel Lawrence, minister of the gospel at Nantwich in Cheshire; with a short account of his life. 1712.

23. A Sermon preached at Salter's-hall, to the Societies for the reformation of manners. June 30, 1712.

24. A Sermon preached at Haberdasher's-hall, on the occasion of the death of the Rev. Mr. Richard Stretton; with a short account of his life. July 13, 1712.

25. Directions for daily Communion with God; in three sermons; shewing how to begin, how to spend, and how to close every day with God. Sept. 8, 1712.

26. An Exhortation at the Close of the Ordination of Mr. Sam. Clark, at St. Alban's. Sept. 17, 1712.

27. Popery a spiritual Tyranny; shewed in a sermon preached on Nov. 5, 1712.

28. A Sermon preached at the Ordination of Mr. Atkinson. Jan. 27, 1713.

29. A Sermon preached on occasion of the funeral of the Rev. Mr. Daniel Burgess; with an account of his life. Feb. 3, 1713.

30. Christ's Favour to Little Children opened and improved. A sermon preached at the public baptising of a child in London, on Mark x. 16. March 6, 1713.

31. A sermon concerning the catechising of Youth, preached to Mr. Harris's catechumens. April 7, 1713.

32. Self-consideration necessary to Self-preservation; or, the Folly of despising our own Souls and our own Ways; opened in two sermons to young people. June 14, 1713.

33. Sober-mindedness pressed upon young People; preached at the catechistical lecture at Mr. Wilcox's meeting-place, and published at the desire of many of the catechumens, most of them being ministers sons. Sept. 2, 1713.

34. A Memorial of the Fire of the Lord. A sermon preached Sept. 2, 1713, on Numb. xi. 3. being the day of remembrance of the burning of London, at Mr. Reynolds's meeting-house.

35. The Pleasantness of a religious Life, opened, proved, and recommended to the consideration of all, and particularly young people. May 21, 1714.

36. The Layman's reasons for his joining in stated Communion with a Congregation of moderate Dissenters.

Besides those lesser discourses, which have deservedly met good acceptance, and I believe have done very much good, every one knows Mr. Henry has published a work much greater than them all; I mean, his Expositions of the Bible. He has gone through the Old Testament in four large volumes in folio, and through the Evangelists and the Acts of the Apostles in a fifth; and was fully bent, if God had spared his life, to have finished the whole in another volume, but in that death has prevented him, and put an end to all his labours, in which he spent himself a free-will offering to the glory of the Redeemer and the good of souls.

There is another treatise which was composed and published by Mr. Henry, though he has not put his name to it; and that is an account of the life and death of Lieutenant Illidge, father to Mr. George Illidge of Nantwich, Mr. Henry's very particular friend. Mr. Henry observes in his diary, that Mr. Illidge desired him to look over some papers that he put into his hands concerning his father; and in doing so, he found many things very remarkable, especially concerning the powerful work of divine grace upon a person advanced in years; and has left it as his thoughts, that God made the son an instrument in the conversion of the father, by the power of that spirit that turns the hearts of fathers to their children. The narrative has some things in it very uncommon, and what cannot but affect a considerate reader.

It were easy to have given an account out of his own papers, of the thoughts and desires of Mr. Henry's soul upon

the publishing of these his works ; with what humility, with what fear, and with what earnest prayer he sent them out into the world ; entirely consecrating all to the honour of God and service of the church : but that would perhaps be tedious to those that did not know him, and not so necessary to those that did know with what a sense of his own unworthiness and dependence upon the grace of God he went on in every part of his work. I shall only say, by what I have seen under his own hand, of his acknowledging God in all he has made public, I cannot but hope a very signal blessing from God will attend them, and make them of great use not only in the present, but in future generations.

A learned and pious minister, to whom Mr. Henry was well known, and very dear, has drawn up a very just character of him, and a very comprehensive one, in the following

E P I T A P H.

Stay, stay, passenger !
 Here lyes precious dust
 Consecrated to the Redeemer ;
 Which was of old predestinated to be framed
 Into a vessel of rich grace,
 And at last of angelical glory :
 To wit, the remains of
 The very reverend MATTHEW HENRY,
 Who was an ornament truly eminent
 To his most excellent parents.
 He was a most happy consolation of two wives successively ;
 Unless that at his death
 He became the cause of perpetual mourning
 To the last of these.
 He was a lasting honour
 To his seven surviving children,
 As being a most affectionate father to his family.
 He was at first minister at Chester,
 And thereafter at Hackney, near London.
 He was a most celebrated preacher,
 Breathing the light of the gospel
 And the zeal of seraphims
 Almost every day.
 He was a living record of the holy scriptures.

His time was continually employed in the exercise of prayer, or singing of psalms, or in catechising the people of his charge, or in delivering sermons before crowded audiences, or in composing his sermons.

He was a writer entirely devoted to the promoting of religion, and advancing souls towards heaven.

And, finally, his Commentaries upon the Old and New Testament, explanatory and practical, fit to improve the English Language, will illustriously recommend him to all those who are seriously concerned about matters of religion, even to the latest posterity.

As to the mysteries contained in the apostolical writings, and in the book of Revelation, he went to view them more closely in heaven.

Well done, good and faithful servant!

THE END OF MR. HENRY'S LIFE.

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